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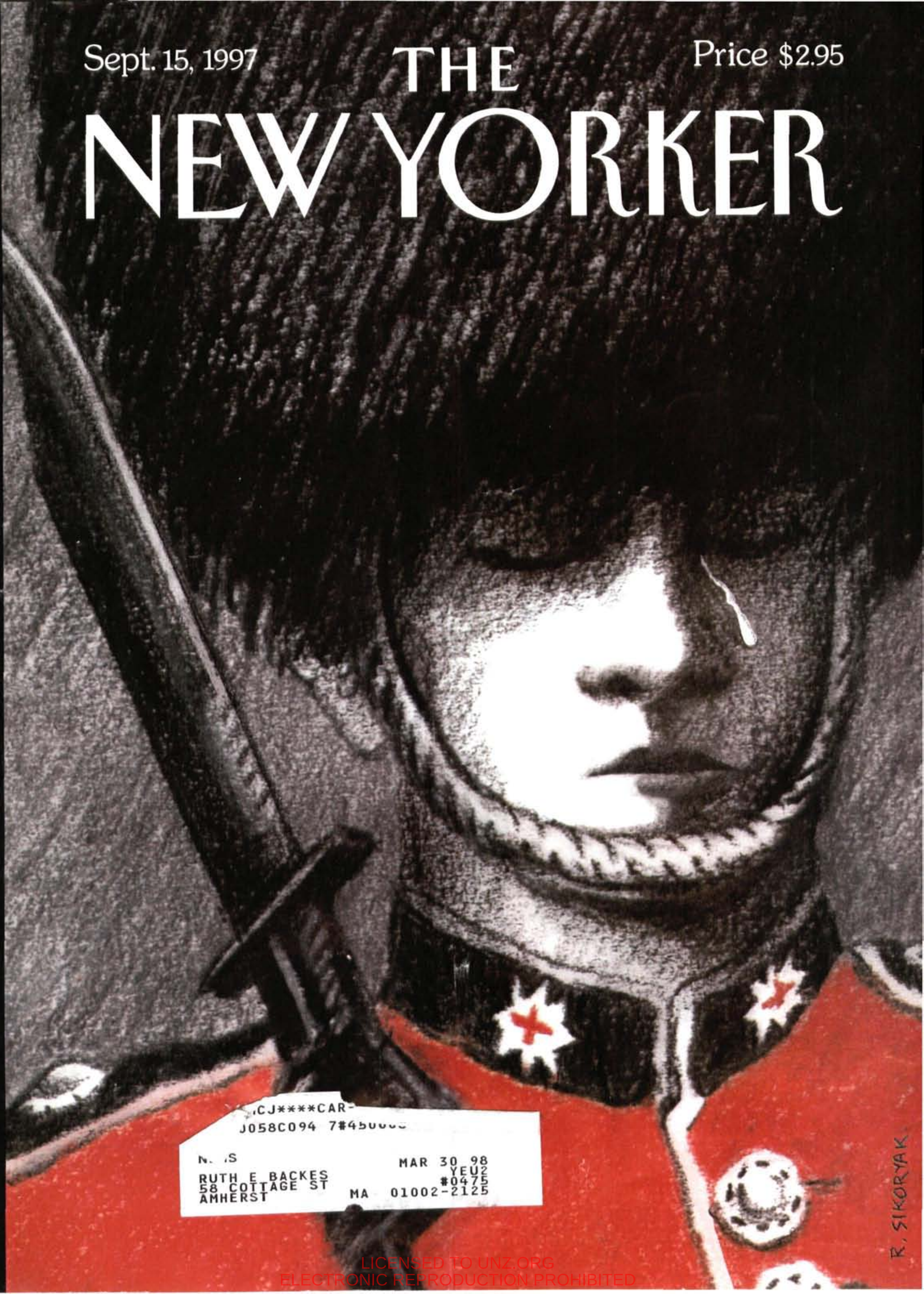

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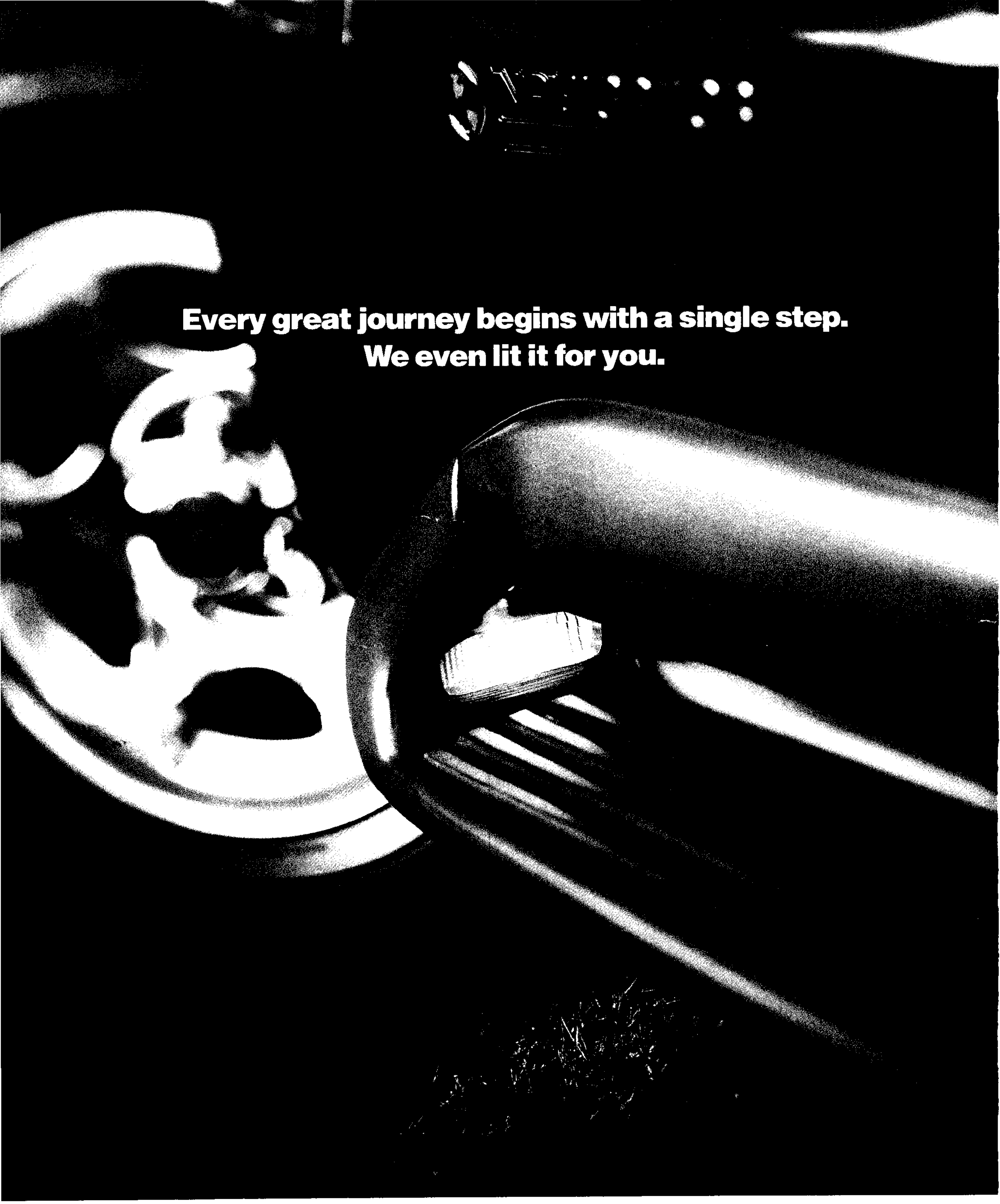
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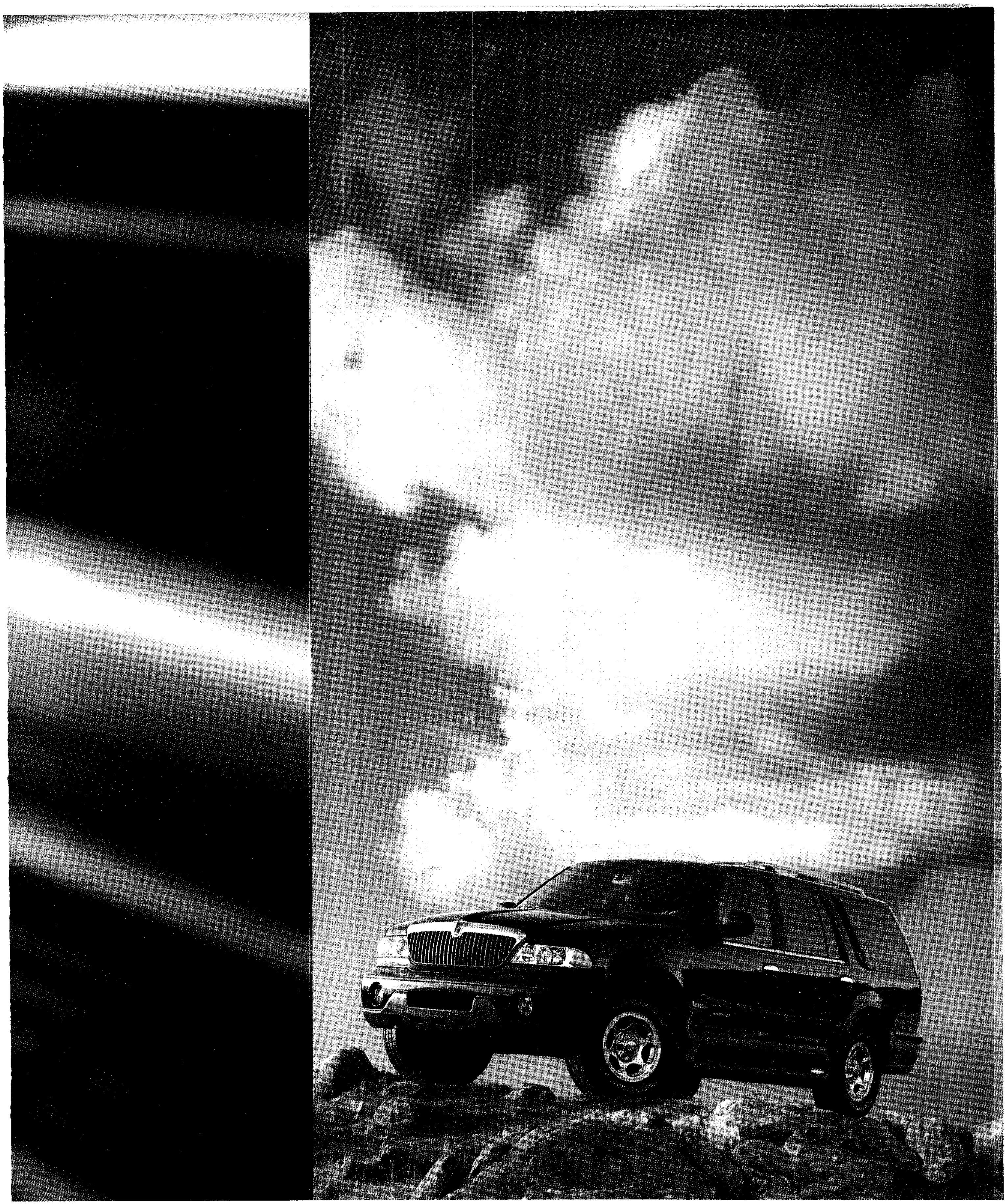

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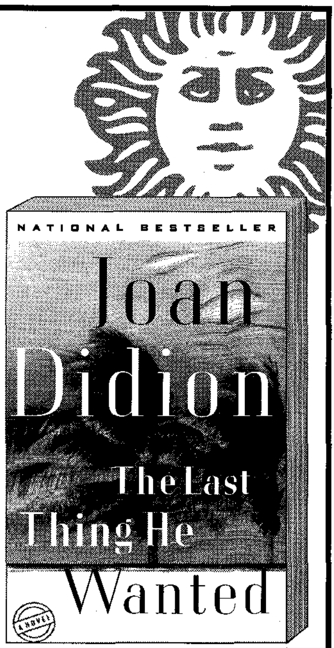

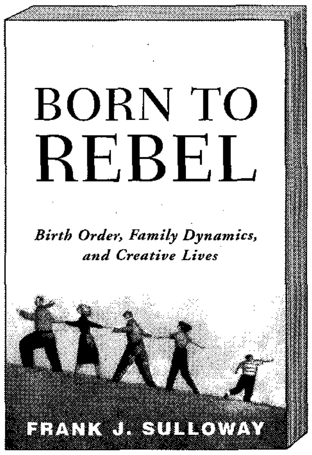

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SEPTEMBER 15, 1997

COMMENT Last Rites . . . . *Anthony Lane* 4
Grief for Diana, and Britain's new emotional climate.

THE MAIL 6

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN 8

THE TALK OF THE TOWN 29
Flak on Fleet Street; the Princess paradox; etc.
The Culture Industry . . . . *Kurt Andersen* 32

DEPARTMENTS

Annals of Communications The Emmy Factory . . . . *Ken Auletta* 34
Is the Emmy an award worth winning anymore?

Annals of Law Privacy Matters . . . . *Geoffrey Robertson* 38
Diana almost makes legal history.

Profile Exile on Main Street . . . . *David Remnick* 42
The suburban underworld of Don DeLillo.

PERSONAL HISTORY Requiem . . . . *Clive James* 50
The author remembers his friendship with Diana.

MANHATTAN CHRONICLES A Woman in Earnest . . . . *Tina Brown* 58
What was on Diana's mind as summer began?

A CRITIC AT LARGE The Problem Princess . . . . *Simon Schama* 62
Her sad end is a familiar tale in the monarchy's history.

REFLECTIONS Crash . . . . *Salman Rushdie* 68
Was Diana's death the result of sexual assault?

FICTION The Mourning . . . . *William Trevor* 70
Unwelcome and Irish in London.

THE CRITICS

Books Arnold Rampersad's "Jackie Robinson" . . . . *Roger Angell* 82
Briefly Noted 87
Books Larry Baker's "The Flamingo Rising" . . . . *Henry Louis Gates, Jr.* 88
Showcase Ang Lee's "The Ice Storm" . . . . *Max Vadukul* 90
The Current Cinema "Intimate Relations," "Gravesend," "Sunday" . . . *Daphne Merkin* 93

POEMS

"Waves in August" . . . . *W. S. Merwin* 47
"The Last Toast (For Anna Akhmatova)" . . . . *Angela Ball* 64

CROSSWORD 8 x 10 Cryptic No. 14 95

SHOUTS & MURMURS The Lump List . . . . *Wendy Wasserstein* 96

COVER *Last Salute, by R. Sikoryak*

DRAWINGS *Stuart Leeds, Bernard Schoenbaum, Danny Shanahan, William Hamilton, Robert Mankoff, Leo Cullum, Roz Chast, Richard Cline, J. B. Handelsman, Peter Steiner, Gahan Wilson, Edward Frascino*

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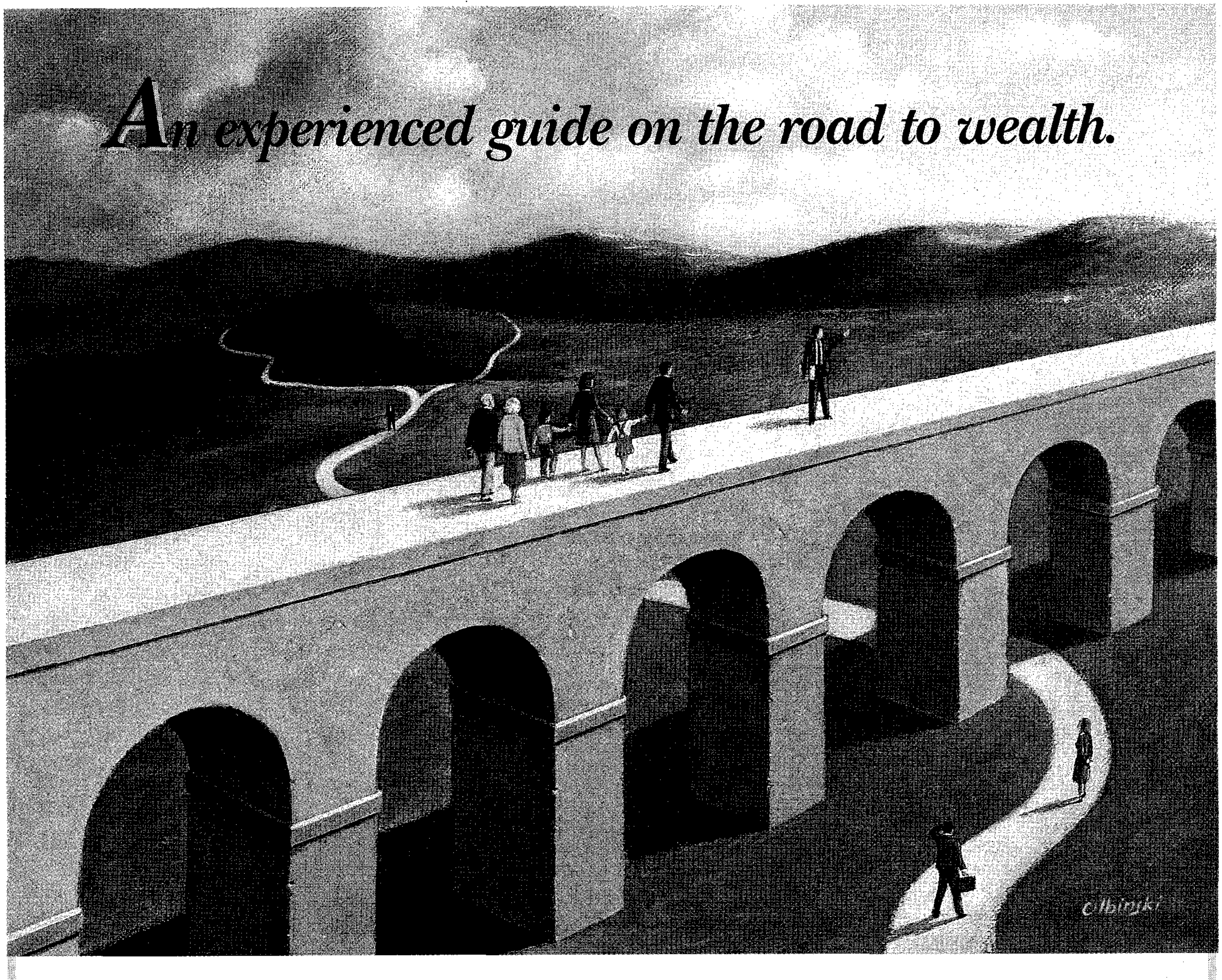
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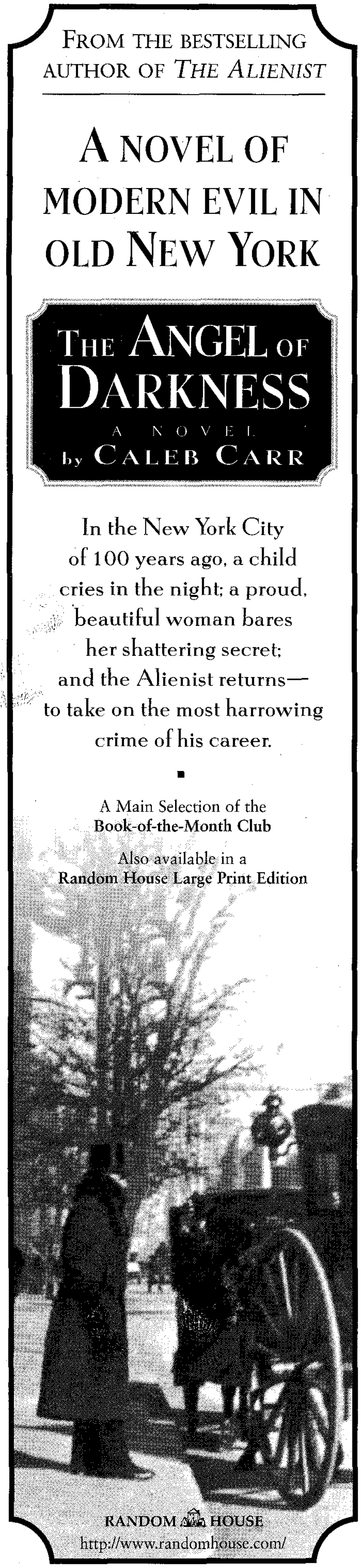
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COMMENT

LAST RITES

Farewell to Diana, and to Britain's stiff upper lip.

LONDON

DIANA, PRINCESS OF WALES, died in Paris in the early hours of Sunday morning. Most Americans heard the news before they went to bed, but the people of England had it worse: they woke up, started to grieve, and haven't stopped since. They have barely had time to rub the sleep from their eyes. What is remarkable is not the magnitude of the response but its tone. It was, to say the least, peculiar to visit Buckingham Palace at midnight on Monday and to stand in line behind four women who clung to one another and kept up a low, keening moan as they waited to lay flowers at the Palace gates. Fifty yards away, beside the statue of Queen Victoria, two gay men stood and howled in each other's arms. It is hard to emphasize just how unusual such behavior is in the vicinity of the royal household.

What is going on here? Cynics would diagnose a bad case of mass hysteria, but right now there are no cynics; for a decent interval, they have all gone to ground. It would be tawdry to question, let alone patronize, the feelings of those who stood for eleven hours to sign the books of condolence at St. James's Palace. Careful scrutiny of the messages that have been left beneath the trees nearby, or pinned to the railings of Diana's former home at Kensington Palace, points to something unprecedented in the emotional culture of Britain. Indeed, they finally give the lie to the global prejudice, joked about for centuries, that Britain does not have an emotional culture. Like most prejudices, this one was both tempting and unjust; it would be fair to say, however, that an Englishman's passions used to be all the more interesting—all the stronger, even—for being restrained. If he failed to cry at the passing of a loved one, that only proved how much he wanted to cry.

Now that has changed. If the last three decades have witnessed a gradual rise in the public temperature, in the will to give vent to feelings that would once have been left to cool, the last sixteen years seem like a fever. From the moment when she stood on the balcony at Buckingham Palace, bared her throat, and leaned up to kiss her startled husband, Diana took it upon herself to demonstrate that the act of reaching out to people was no longer a metaphor. The hug, the boogie, the flinging wide of arms, the splayed hand that fended off photographers, the swallow dive from the side of a yacht: the Princess of Wales did things with her body that no royal had ever dreamed of, and we naturally assumed that her soul was equally elastic. The Queen's idea of an intimate public gesture

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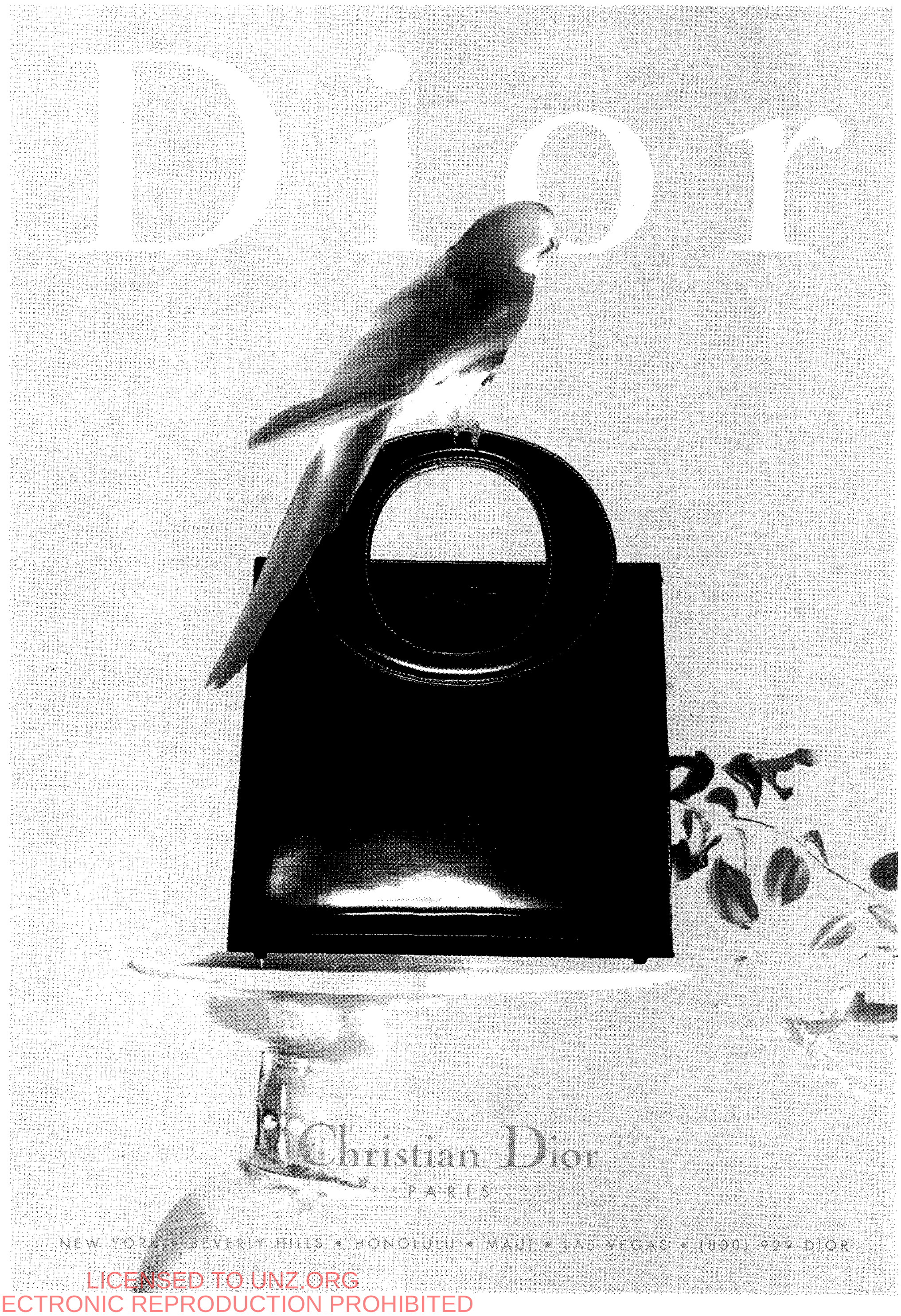
is to pat the steaming neck of a successful horse; Diana sat down beside an AIDS patient and shook hands. Now she is gone, and the manner in which she is being mourned is a direct result of the way in which she lived. When the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, appeared on television to pay tribute, he spoke in faltering tones, with the near-hamminess of the truly sincere. It was not a good speech—the very opposite of statesmanlike—and that is why it went down so well. He judged the modern mood to a millimetre. To be fluently dignified, to give any hint of the classical rhetoric of grief, would now be deemed insulting; and that is Diana's doing. No wonder she was loved in the United States. Many Americans would consider stricken spontaneity to be the only option in these circumstances, and it has been a bizarre reversal of the great Jamesian theme to watch people in London struggling, at short notice, to shrug off the expressive habits of one nation and borrow those of another. The Princess of Wales was supposed to join and grace the British Royal Family, but the blast of grief that followed her death was highly un-British and decidedly unroyal, and her true family runs into millions.

All of which deepens the question of how on earth, or in what earth, such a woman should be laid to rest. There have been rustlings of uneasy debate. The silence of the Queen and her immediate circle, which is an entirely proper form of mourning, has been read as evidence of a cold heart; the refusal to fly a flag at half-mast over Buckingham Palace strikes even loyal subjects as petty quibbling over tradition; and there was resentment that the short, one-mile route originally planned for the cortège would afford only a fraction of the crowd a chance to say farewell. Palace officials heralded the occasion as "a unique service for a unique person": neither a royal funeral nor one of those rare state funerals that have been given to commoners—to Nelson, Wellington, and Churchill. If anything, it feels almost antiroyal, and eerily godless. Who would want twenty-one-gun salutes for someone whose last major campaign was against the use of land mines? Who needs the choir of Westminster Abbey to sing angelic anthems that would have bored the Princess to tears?

There have been high swells of mourning before. A crowd of three hundred thousand filed past the coffin of Sir Winston Churchill in 1965. When Nelson's body lay in the Royal Hospital at Greenwich, the governor wrote that "the mob outside consisted yesterday of upwards of 30,000 & equally so today and more outrageous." The present outrage has been louder still, some of it far from peaceable, as if the mourners were bracing themselves not for formal obsequies but for a protest march. It is hard not to sense that Old England is on trial, as if it had betrayed the woman who died; the Princess of Wales left the monarchy both brightened and broken, and no one can tell whether her death will do the same to the magnificent ceremonies of state. Will her funeral be remembered as a time of reaching out, or of holding back?

It is just possible to do both. The sailors who accompanied Nelson's body were supposed to fold the ensign—the naval flag—and place it on the coffin. Instead, as his biographer Christopher Hibbert relates, they ripped a section off and stuffed pieces of it into their jackets. In the words of one observer, "that was *Nelson*." Maybe England was never quite so stuffy after all. And maybe that is why so many travelled to be near the Princess of Wales, in the empty but fullhearted hope that she could yet come close to them. That was Diana. —ANTHONY LANE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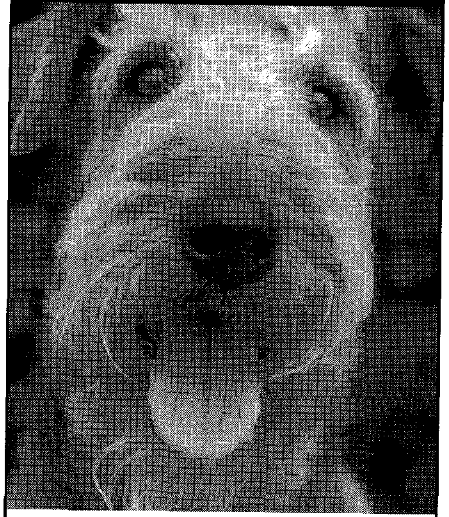

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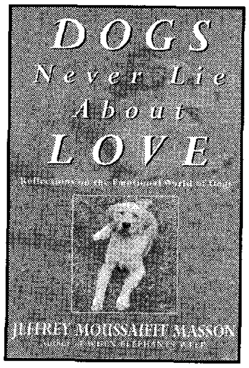
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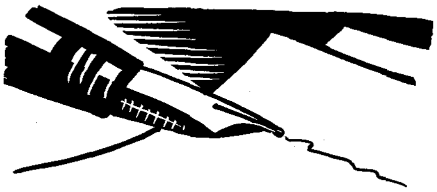

THE CASE OF THE SWISS TRIP

Alex Ross, in his thoughtful discussion of my book "The Napoleon of Crime: The Life and Times of Adam Worth, Master Thief" (Books, August 11th), argues that I overlooked "a matter of timing" in suggesting that the fictional master criminal Professor Moriarty was based on Worth. He states that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wrote "The Final Problem," which introduced Moriarty, "three months before Worth's remarkable career was first reported in detail in England (in July of 1893)."

On the contrary, my dear Watson. The latest research indicates that Doyle completed the story—in which Moriarty and Holmes (apparently) fall to their deaths while grappling at Reichenbach Falls, in Switzerland—during the latter part of 1893. Martin Booth, in his new biography of Doyle, concludes that "there is firm evidence" for the later date. Doyle visited Switzerland in August, and was paid for "The Final Problem" in October. The story was published in December.

The view that Doyle wrote "The Final Problem" in April of 1893 is based on a letter to his mother that month, in which he said that he was working on the "last Holmes story, after which the gentleman vanishes, never to return!" It now appears that, though Doyle planned to kill off Holmes by that April, he didn't settle on a method until after his August visit to Reichenbach Falls, and that the revelation of Worth's crimes, in July, provided the perfect murder weapon in the shape of Moriarty, the fictionalized Worth.

BEN MACINTYRE
Paris, France

Alex Ross replies:

John Dickson Carr and Charles Higham, in their biographies of Doyle, both describe a Swiss trip that took place early in 1893. Even if they conspired to invent an itinerary wholesale, we have Doyle writing in April that he was "in the middle of" the last Holmes story—one in which Moriarty figures from the outset. The muddle over the date of Doyle's Swiss vacation can be cleared up only by a biography based on the author's long-inaccessible papers. Unfortunately, that isn't the book Booth has written: he merely provides fresh speculation on familiar documents. I still contend that Moriarty was not inspired by Worth and that "The Napoleon of Crime" is an excellent book nonetheless.

DEPT. OF AMPLIFICATION

Calvin Tomkins, near the end of his sharp piece on the Duke and Duchess of Windsor ("Love for Sale," August 11th), writes that "neither of them cared about books or painting or music." Not entirely so: the Duke did care about music, both cabaret and jazz, and he was for a time a passionate amateur drummer. His drumming career may have reached its apogee in 1933, when the Ellington band made its first trip to England. Ellington's longtime drummer Sonny Greer described it this way: "We did a party for Lord Beaverbrook. . . . The future King George sat in on piano, and he and Duke played duets. Then I noticed this skinny little guy squatting near the drums and watching me, and pretty soon he asks can we play 'The Charleston.' We did and he danced like crazy. Then he asked me could he sit in on drums, and I said, 'Of course, my man.' Somebody told me who he was: the Prince of Wales. I christened him the Whale, and it stuck. In the fifties, in New York, the Duke came across the street from El Morocco to the Embers, where I was working, and I called him the Whale and we sat and talked and told a few lies." The Duke of Windsor may have passed his time later in life doing embroidery, as Tomkins points out, but chances are that he wished he could dump the Duchess for a few hours and go sit in somewhere.

WHITNEY BALLIETT
New York City

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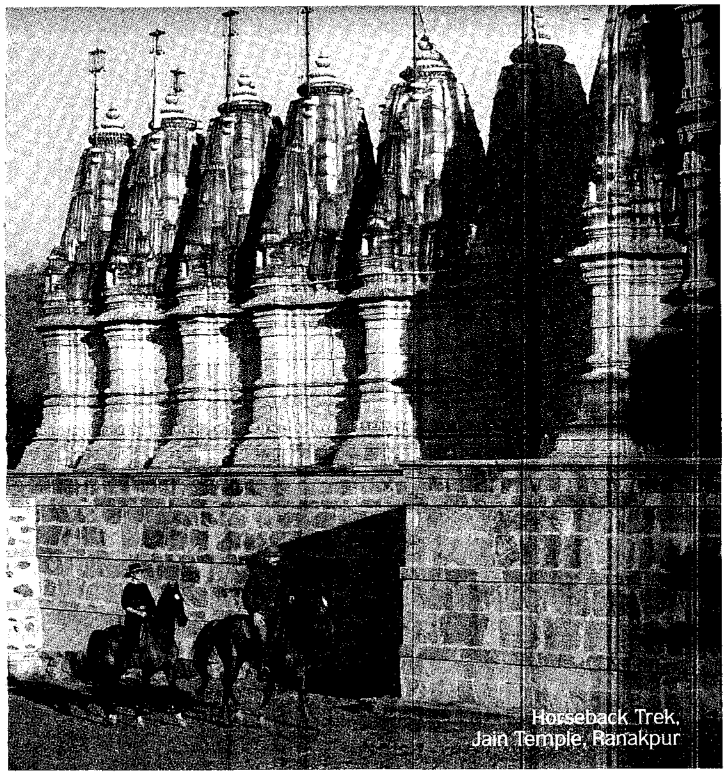

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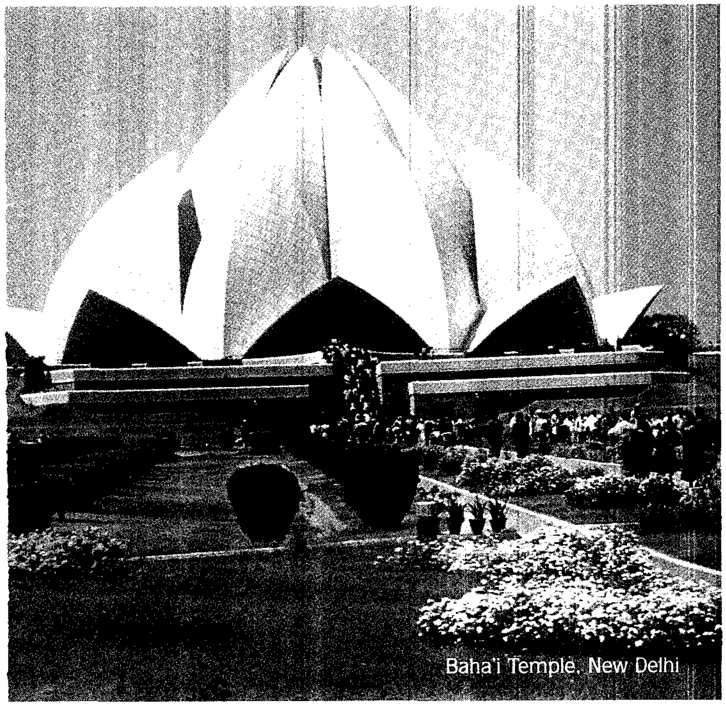

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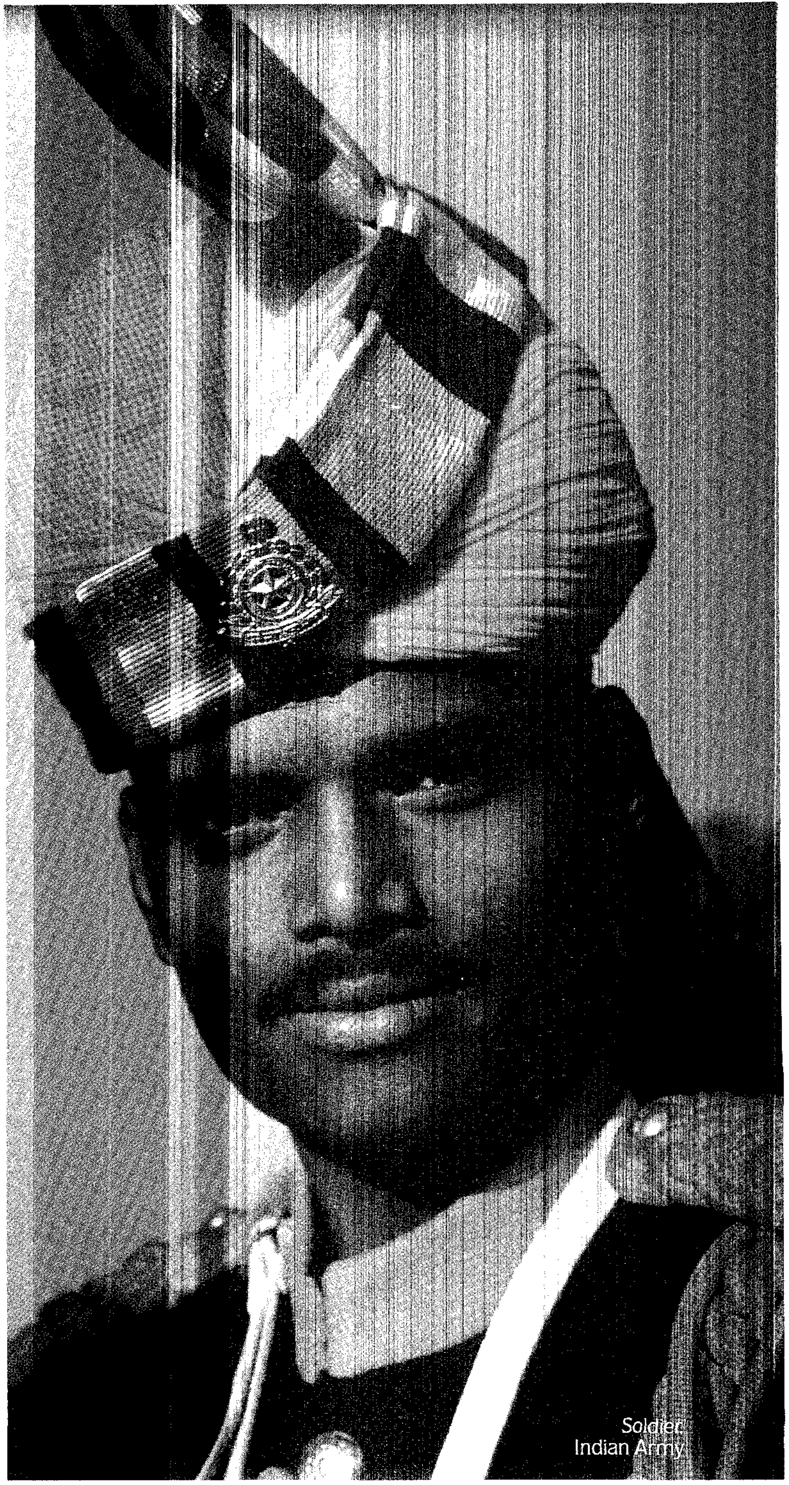

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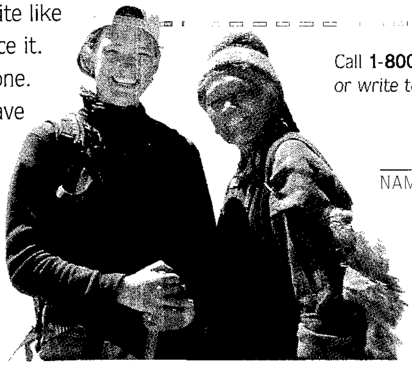

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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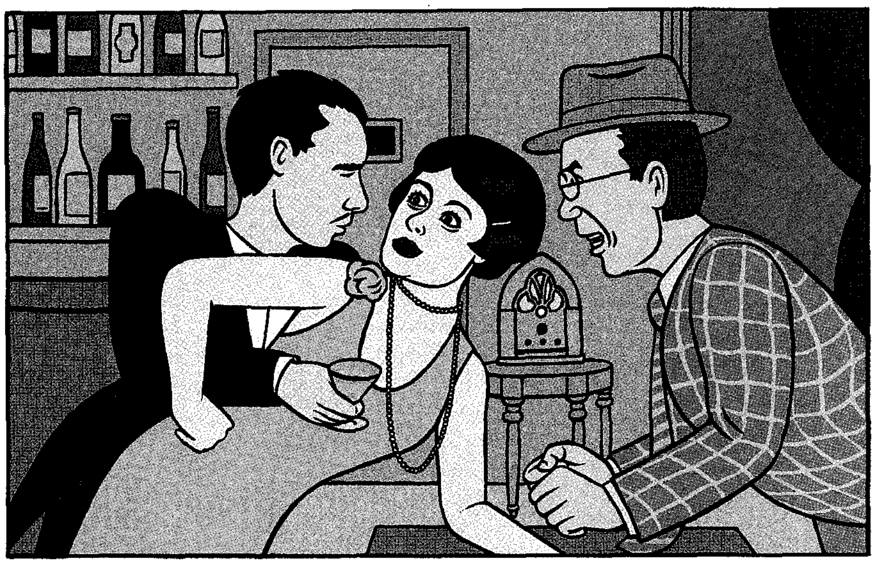
THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Atwater: Fixin' to Die—George Furth directs a one-man portrait of the late Republican National Committee chairman and controversial spin doctor Lee Atwater. Written by Robert Myers and starring Bruce McIntosh, who originated the role in 1992, in Los Angeles. Previews Sept. 11-13. Opens Sept. 14 at 8. (28th Street Theatre, 120 W. 28th St. 591-0019.)

Caught in the Act—The Threshold Theatre's festival of international one-acts, by playwrights both well known (Günter Grass, Arthur Schnitzler, Fernando Arrabal, Tristan Tzara) and obscure, directed by, among others, Michael Rupert, Paul Lazar, and Mitchell Greenberg. Opens Sept. 11 at 8 and continues through Oct. 5. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202.)



Preston Sturges's "Strictly Dishonorable," staged by the Target Margin Theatre.

MICHAEL KUPPERMAN

Fade Out–Fade In—The York Theatre Company's Musicals in Mufti series of overlooked works opens with a concert production of this 1964 musical about Hollywood in the thirties, with book and lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green (who wrote it as a vehicle for Carol Burnett) and music by Jule Styne. Sept. 12 at 8, Sept. 13 at 2:30 and 8, and Sept. 14 at 2:30. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 935-5820.)

Plunge—A new comedy by Christopher Kyle, about four college friends whose country reunion takes an unconvivial turn, is the season's first offering from Playwrights Horizons. Ron Lagomarsino directed. In previews. (416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

P.S. 122—Sept. 11-14 at 7:30: "Cab Legs," the latest work by Elevator Repair Service, a troupe that blends elements of theatre with choreography from Indian movie musicals and Betty Boop cartoons. . . . ¶ Sept. 11-14 at 8: "The American Chestnut," a new work by performance artist Karen Finley, who uses the sickly tree as a metaphor for a decaying society. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Both shows continue through Sept. 28.)

Skyscraper—A romantic comedy set in Chicago, atop an architectural treasure slated for destruction. Written by David Auburn and directed by Michael Rego. Previews begin Sept. 11. (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. 279-4200.)

Three for All—The Spanish troupe Tricicle (Joan Gracia, Paco Mir, and Carles Sans), which specializes in physical comedy, brings its latest production to the Union Square Theatre. Previews begin Sept. 16. (100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

Tracers—A revival of the 1980 memory drama created by John DiFusco and eight Vietnam War veterans, presented by the 29th Street Rep. Previews begin Sept. 11. (212 W. 29th St. 465-0575.)

OPENED RECENTLY

Always . . . Patsy Cline—Not quite a revue, not quite a play, this spirited and Nashville-slick celebration of the late, great country singer is, rather, a streamlined song-delivery device: Tori Lynn Palazola, who plays Cline, sings twenty-one songs in a mere two hours. The show is based on Cline's relationship with a fan in Houston, played with large-hearted gusto by Margo Martindale. Palazola doesn't sound exactly like Patsy, but she's good at doing Patsy, and more than good when it comes to the slower numbers. The unsung, as it were, heroes of the production are the six members of the backup band, titans of twang all. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

And the Sky Can Still Fall on Our Heads—An evening of one-acts by Antonin Artaud, adapted by Michael LeLand and Dennis Moritz. (Nuyorican Poets Café, 236 E. 3rd St. 465-3167. Closes Sept. 28.)

Annie—Can the powerhouse waif find another bonanza in this twentieth-anniversary revival of her Broadway musical? With eight-year-old Brittny Kissinger wearing the red fright wig, anything is possible: no one ever went broke underestimating the intelligence of the New York public. Directed by Martin Charnin. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

As Bees in Honey Drown—In Douglas Carter Beane's comic indictment of America's obsession with fame, J. Smith-Cameron is hilarious as a cultural arbiter whose fabricated personality is, as an adoring Saks salesman (the delightful T. Scott Cunningham) puts it, "a mixture of every woman I've ever loved in a movie." The script, which has been given a vivid production by the Drama Dept., is a gleeful bon mot-filled éclair whose satirical power sours only when, every once in a while, it takes itself too seriously. With Bo Foxworth as the young novelist who falls under Smith-Cameron's spell. Mark Brokaw directed. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

Barrymore—Christopher Plummer's rich, unmiked voice hits every note of sarcasm and self-loathing in William Luce's rambunctious script as he perfectly captures the grief behind the old ham's gallant frivolity. Well directed by Gene Saks. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

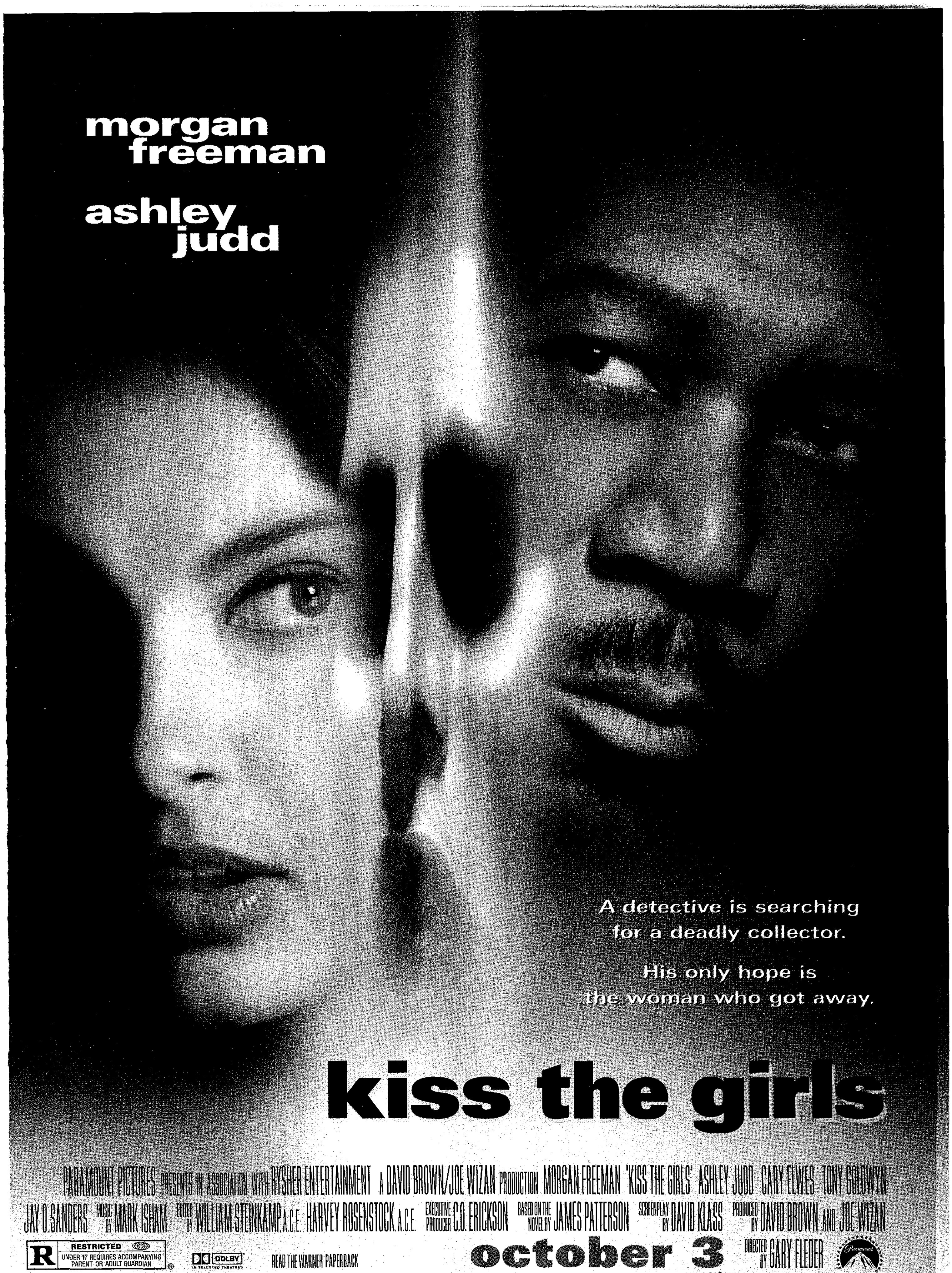
Bermuda Avenue Triangle—A sexy gambler on the skids (Joseph Bologna) returns the zing to the lives of two elderly women, a Jew (Renee Taylor) and a Catholic (Nanette Fabray), whose sullen daughters have put them out to pasture in a Las Vegas retirement home. Audience members unfamiliar with the husband-and-wife playwright-actors Taylor and Bologna may think they've stumbled into the couple's monthly fan-club meeting at this silly farce, which traffics in the kind of cookie-cutter stereotypes that rate high on the matinée-crowd yuk-o-meter. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

Chicago City Limits—The improv company presents its latest revue, "@Chicago City Limits.comedy." (Chicago City Limits Theatre, First Ave. at 61st St. 888-5233.)

The Evil Spell of the Butterfly—The Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre's version of García Lorca's 1920 fable, in which the actors portray insects. Performances are in Spanish. (304 W. 47th St. 354-1293. Closes Sept. 28.)

Forever Tango—This stepchild of Vegas and Buenos Aires gets everything right, from the basic ingredients (sex, pomade) to the big emotions (e.g., the weltschmerz of the bandonion players). One after another, the acrobatic couples flaunt their scissor steps with lubricious joy. But the real treat is the character dancing: it's a big surprise to encounter so many styles—suave, measured, sleazy, torrid, muscular, slapstick—and such a variety of song-length mini-dramas. Created and directed by Luis Bravo. (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde—Writer-director Moisés Kaufman renders the


morgan
freeman
ashley
judd
A detective is searching
for a deadly collector.
His only hope is
the woman who got away.
kiss the girls

PARAMOUNT PICTURES PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH RYSHER ENTERTAINMENT A DAVID BROWN/JOE WIZAN PRODUCTION MORGAN FREEMAN 'KISS THE GIRLS' ASHLEY JUDD CARY ELWES TONY GOLDWYN JAY O. SANDERS MUSIC BY MARK ISHAM EDITED BY WILLIAM STEINKAMP, A.C.E. HARVEY ROSENSTOCK, A.C.E. EXECUTIVE PRODUCER C.O. ERICKSON BASED ON THE NOVEL BY JAMES PATTERSON SCREENPLAY BY DAVID KLASS PRODUCED BY DAVID BROWN AND JOE WIZAN

R RESTRICTED UNDER 17 REQUIRES ACCOMPANYING PARENT OR ADULT GUARDIAN ®

DOLBY IN SELECTED THEATRES

READ THE WARNER PAPERBACK

october 3

DIRECTED BY GARY FLEDER

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playwright's trials from edited transcripts, interposing passages from letters, Wilde's writings, and other people's memoirs and commentaries. The result, thanks to Kaufman's clever (if occasionally self-indulgent) direction and a strong, versatile cast—especially Michael Emerson, in the title role—is powerful and surprisingly theatrical. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

Hard Times—A stage adaptation of Dickens's novel by Stephen Jeffreys is the season opener for the Pearl Theatre Company. (80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802.)

Hello and Goodbye—The South African playwright Athol Fugard's 1965 drama, about a family living under apartheid, in a Rattlestick staging directed by Howard Meyer. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 627-2556. Closes Sept. 28.)

How I Learned to Drive—Paula Vogel's memory play, about a young woman (Jayne Atkinson) who comes of age too quickly under the tutelage of her pedophile uncle (Bruce Davison), is a clear-eyed marvel, and the Vineyard Theatre has given it a beautifully spare and lucid production. With insight and humor, Vogel opens up a subject previously narrowed by fury, voyeurism, and melodrama. Mark Brokaw directed. (Century, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

Jekyll & Hyde—Enjoyable bombast, loosely based on the Robert Louis Stevenson novel. With music by Frank Wildhorn, lyrics and a book by Leslie Bricusse, and solid direction by Robin Phillips. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/12/97.) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

John: His Story—A drama based on the fourth of the Gospels, staged by Houston's A.D. Players. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

The Last Night of Ballyhoo—In this romantic comedy of manners, set in Atlanta in 1939, Alfred Uhry stays true to a Southern sense of propriety: he takes on an unsavory topic (anti-Semitism among the Jewish upper crust) without dwelling on it long enough to offend anyone, and, like a practiced host, he shows you a good time without taxing you. Ron Lagomarsino directed. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100.)

The Life—This new musical, about the oldest profession in Times Square (before it became known as the new Times Square) and the men who profit from its practitioners, is a cynical, poisonous concoction, featuring phony funk, fake blues, overcooked pop, and a cartoonish, insulting book. The cast includes some good singers, notably Lillias White and Pamela Isaacs. (5/12/97) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

Lypsinka Is Harriet Craig—The drag artistes Lypsinka (in her first major speaking role) and Varla Jean Merman join forces in a song-and-dance version of the 1950 Joan Crawford film "Harriet Craig." (Mother, 432 W. 14th St., at Washington St. 366-5680. Closes Sept. 28.)

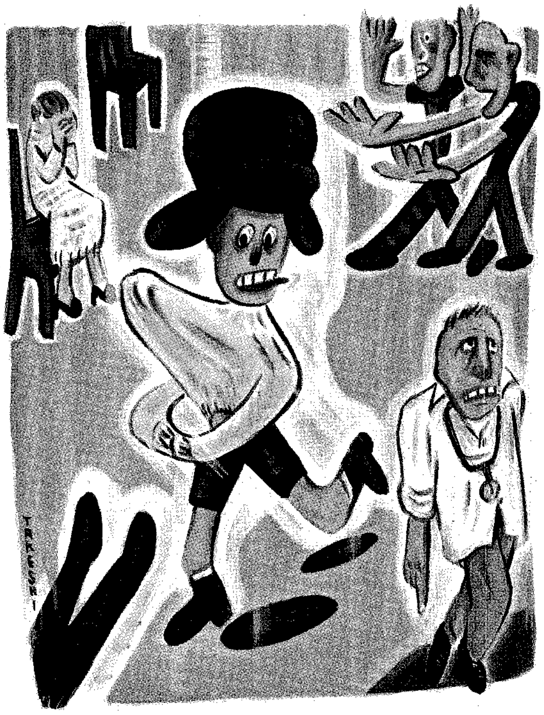
The Marital Bliss of Francis and Maxine—A couple of nineteen-twenties radio stars leading double lives plan an on-the-air publicity marriage, in a musical conceived by and starring Bill Torres and Fay Simpson. (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. 665-8223. Closes Sept. 14.)

Mere Mortals—David Ives, who created the wonderful "All in the Timing," has lately changed his tune to "All in the Recycling": only two of the six short plays here are new. They are, however, Ives at his clever best. "Time Flies" is about the short life of two mayflies—only one day to grow up and get it on before going to the great beyond—and the two actors who play them, Anne O'Sullivan and Arnie Burton, are perfectly buggy. "Dr. Fritz; or, The Forces of Light" is a piece of insanity set somewhere south of the border, and Nancy Opel, woman of a hundred lunatic accents (she was simply terrific in "All in the Timing"), gives an inspired performance as a *loca* local and as a mad German doctor. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

A Midsummer Night's Dream and The Taming of the Shrew—Gorilla Rep's free outdoor stagings of Shakespeare's comedies run in repertory—"Dream" on Thursdays and Saturdays, "Shrew" on Fridays and Sundays—through Sept. 21, in the southwest corner of Washington Square Park. (For more information, call 807-4999.)

Miracle Mile—In his one-man show, Clark Middleton recounts the highs and lows of his battle with rheumatoid arthritis. (Theatre Row Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 358-5041. Closes Sept. 28.)

Misalliance—Shaw's 1910 comedy, set in the country house of an English underwear magnate is subtitled "A Debate in One Sitting," and it rounds up the usual suspects: the merits and demerits of the bourgeoisie versus the aristocracy, the maddening institution of marriage, and the possibly mad institution of the family. It's a rather bossy piece of work—a comedic tract more than a comedy—and it clocks in at a derrière-numbing three hours. Nevertheless, it has much to recommend it: namely, the glimmer in Shaw's cold eye, Derek McLane's splendid set, and a superb ensemble, led by the warm and magnetic Brian Murray and featuring Patricia Conolly, Remak Ramsay, Zak Orth, and Elizabeth Marvel. David Warren directed. (9/8/97) (Laura Pels, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)



Elevator Repair Service's "Cab Legs," at P.S. 122.

TAKESHI TADATSU

Rough Crossing—Jean Cocteau Rep launches its new season with Tom Stoppard's 1984 farce, based on Ferenc Molnár's 1925 "The Play in the Castle." It takes place aboard a steamship bound from Southampton to New York, where two theatrical partners (Craig Smith and Harris Berlinsky) are to open their new musical comedy, "The Cruise of the Dodo." A dramaturgically inclined cabin steward (Christopher Black), an unfinished second act, and a triangle involving the composer (Tim Deak) and the musical's libidinous stars (Elise Stone and Charles Parnell) keep the waters roiling. The talented cast's renditions of Stoppard's songs (with original music for this production by Ellen Mandel) are highlights. Scott Shattuck directed. (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

1776—One of the charms of Sherman Edwards and Peter Stone's still fresh 1969 musical about the drafting of the Declaration of Independence is that it's free of sentimental throat-clearing about This Great Nation of Ours; it shows our Founding Fathers—J. Adams, B. Franklin, T. Jefferson, et al.—behaving a lot like feuding brothers. Scott Ellis's lean, lively production and the many vivid performances bring the Continental Congressmen's personalities and ideas into high relief; the result is possibly the most entertaining and wittiest history lesson you've ever received. Brent Spiner's Adams is dour and flinty, yet extremely sympathetic, and Pat Hingle's Franklin is a puckish Buddha, both lusty and lazy. As Jefferson, Paul Michael Valley doesn't make much of an impression, possibly because this Jefferson is conceived as being a bit thick—a sort of Moron of Monticello, able to get over his writer's block and begin working on the D. of I. only after getting it on with his wife. But it's a forgivable misstep in an otherwise light-footed show. (9/8/97) (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Strictly Dishonorable—The Target Margin Theatre's Lost American Classics season has begun with a 1929 stage comedy by Preston Sturges, set in a New York City speakeasy. (Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874.)

Titanic—Though this musical about history's most tragic maiden voyage contains no small number of historical and theatrical misjudgments, it nevertheless manages to take you very close to the heart of the matter—the enormity of the disaster and its heartbreaking human details—and it qualifies as a genuine addition to American musical theatre. Richard Jones, who directed, and Stewart Laing, who designed the sets, have established an operatic atmosphere that minimizes the flaws in Peter Stone's book and Maury Yeston's music and lyrics; miraculously, the show steers clear of both the Scylla of camp and the Charybdis of bad taste, and the result is an evening that's both sombre and joyful, grave and entertaining. John Cunningham appears as Captain Smith, David Garrison as the chairman of the White Star Line, and—most memorably—Brian d'Arcy James as a stoker, Martin Moran as a wireless operator, and Victoria Clark as a celebrity-obsessed second-class passenger. (5/12/97) (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

LONG RUNS

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **BRING IN DA NOISE, BRING IN DA FUNK:** Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CHICAGO:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY STRIKES BACK!:** Stardust, Broadway at 51st St. 239-6200. . . . **A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **GRANDMA SYLVIA'S FUNERAL:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. . . . **HOWARD CRABTREE'S WHEN PIGS FLY:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. . . . **I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. . . . **THE KING AND I:** Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100. . . . **LATE NITE CATECHISM:** St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **RENT:** Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. . . . **SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 239-6200.

DANCE

Dance Theatre of Harlem—After a two-year absence from local stages, the uptown jewel returns, with four programs—one of new work, one garland of Balanchine, and two dance cards of selected repertory. (Davis Hall, City College, Convent Ave. at 134th St. 650-0077. Sept. 9, Sept. 11-12, and Sept. 16 at 8; Sept. 10 at 12:30 (a family matinée) and 8; Sept. 13 at 2 and 8; and Sept. 14 at 3. Through Sept. 21.)

"El Puente/The Bridge"—For the season opener at Danspace Project, two choreographers (Mexican native Vivian Cruz and New Yorker Sondra Loring) and a composer (Ariel Guzik, of Mexico

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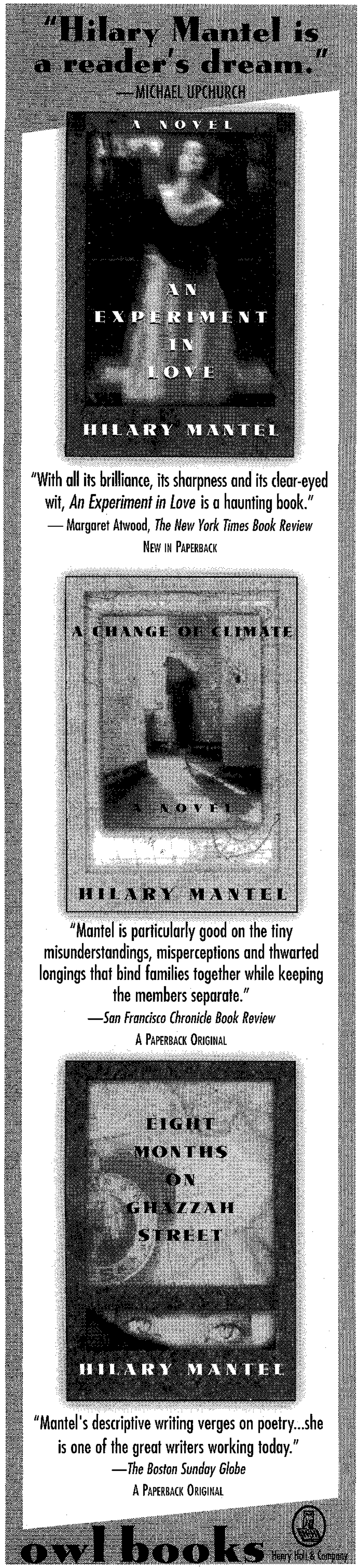

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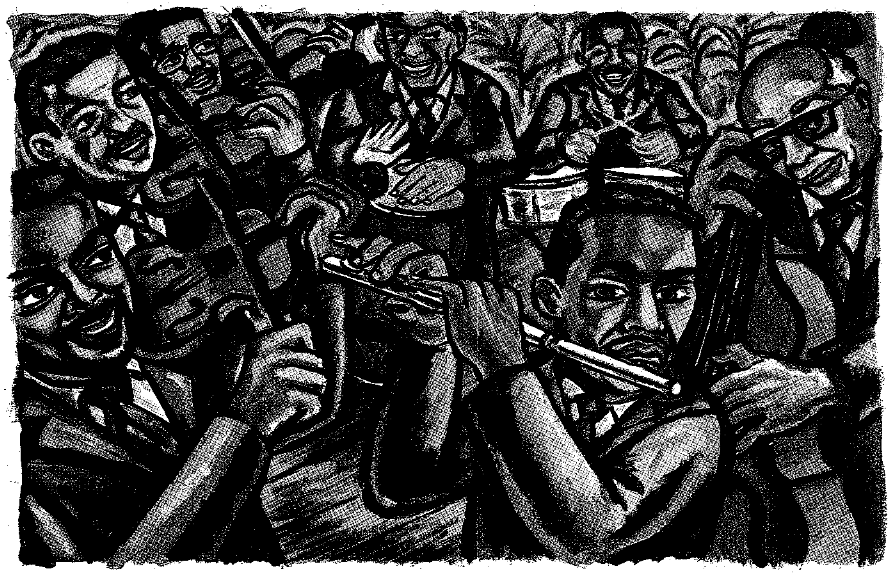
City) collaborate on a full-length bilingual work created during residencies on both sides of the border. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. Sept. 11-14 at 8:30.)

"TWILIGHT AT THE TIP"—A walking tour cum site-specific performance, organized and choreographed by Mary Abrams, who somehow sees intimations of her native Iowa plains in off-hours Wall Street. The tour winds from the Vietnam Memorial to the Stock Exchange and includes local history, musical tableaux, a semi-spontaneous parade that may or may not include passing pinstripers, and alfresco dance. (Sept. 15 at 7. For reservations, call 642-8256. Through Sept. 22.)

"DANCE NOW 97"—A pride of dancers appearing in selected downtown-dance preserves. Sept. 10 at 7, 8, and 9: David Parker, Kristin Eliasberg, Amos Pinhasi, and a host of others. (Joyce SoHo, 155 Mercer St.) . . . ¶ Sept. 11 at 6:30 and 7:15: Short works, by In Young Sohn, Jeanette Stoner, and others, in an art gallery. (O.K. Harris, 383 West Broadway.) . . . ¶ Sept. 12 at 8:30: Aerobic choreography at the World Gym. (232 Mercer St.) . . . ¶ Sept. 13 at 1, 2, and 3: More small dance companies, including Open 24 Hours Dance Company and Cortez & Co. (Joyce SoHo.) . . . At 8: Big guns (Doug Elkins, Jennifer Mueller, Dudley Williams, and others) at the Great Hall. (Cooper Union, 7 E. 7th St. For more information on all events, call the Downtown Arts Festival at 925-4200.)

PILAR RIOJA—The *reina* of Spanish dance celebrates a quarter century of New York seasons with a range of work, from "La Monja Gitana," based on a García Lorca poem about a nun reminded of her Gypsy childhood, to her latest piece (in a more secular vein), "Orgía." (Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850. Sept. 10-12 at 7 and Sept. 13-14 at 3.)



Orquesta Aragón returns to New York City for a night at S.O.B's.

ELIZABETH UYEHARA

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

PANTERA—"Far Beyond Driven," the 1994 release by these self-proclaimed cowboys from hell, went all the way to No. 1. The band's success probably has a lot to do with singer Philip Anselmo's trademark "guttural spews," which, we would wager, are best appreciated from a distance. Live, the boys promise to "crush at your ears like a vice [*sic*]." Their newest record is called "Official Live: 101 Proof." (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. Sept. 10 at 7:30.)

EMERSON, LAKE & PALMER—Welcome back, my friends, to the show that never ends. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Sept. 10 at 8.)

JAMES TAYLOR—A perennial attraction who always delivers. Taylor's voice remains untouched by time, and his back catalogue has aged like a well-oiled leather daybed. (The Theatre at Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Sept. 10-11 and Sept. 13, all at 8.)

DAVE VALENTIN—Talk about a tough job: as a Latin-jazz flutist, Valentin has to be twice as virile as the raging percussionists surrounding him while keeping in touch with the suave balladeer within. (World Financial Center Plaza, West St. at Liberty St. Sept. 11 at 6. No tickets necessary.)

BLUR—Don't tell Oasis, but this waggish foursome may well be the most celebrated band in England since the Smiths. Last year's offering, simply titled "Blur," tightened the grip on the British imagination which the band first achieved in 1994, when "Parklife"—a gleefully satiric collection that captured just about every mood in the history of British rock—unexpectedly broke through, making chameleonlike songwriter Damon Albarn the object of the kind of praise that was once reserved for Ray Davies and Pete Townshend. (Roseland. Sept. 11 at 7:30.)

"DIZZY'S BIG BAND BOP"—The common wisdom is that the bebop renegades favored small groups, because they were revolting against the tyranny of the hidebound swing-era big bands. No one, it seems, told Dizzy Gillespie, for, soon after his revolutionary if short-lived partnership with Charlie Parker ended, in 1945, the brilliant trumpeter put together his own bopping big band. Dizzy must have thought long and hard about the move, because this large ensemble got a great deal accomplished in a short time. In addition to leading the whiplash performances that made bebop safe for big bands, Gillespie codified Afro-Cuban jazz when he brought in the electrifying Cuban conga player Chano Pozo and introduced such steamers as "Manteca," "Tin Tin Deo," and "Cubana Be/Cubana Bop." (The band's rhythm section, which included John Lewis, Ray Brown, Milt Jackson, and Kenny Clarke, went on to form the first edition of the Modern Jazz Quartet.) For its tribute to Gillespie's band, the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra has stocked its ranks with superlative players, including Lewis and Jackson, the Dizzyesque trumpeter Jon Faddis, the Cuban piano dynamo Chucho Valdes, the refined young rhythm drummer Lewis Nash, and bassist Rodney Whitaker. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Sept. 11 and Sept. 13 at 8.)

NANCI GRIFFITH—On her early albums, this folk and country singer from Texas struck some listeners as a lightweight talent, but she's been setting them straight with the energy and solid good taste of her recent work. And she puts on a thrilling show. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. 564-4882. Sept. 12 at 8.)

MARY J. BLIGE—The big, bodacious R. & B. diva headlines a high-profile urban all-star lineup that includes Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, Aaliyah, Dru Hill, and Ginuwine. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Sept. 12 at 8.)

The Music Festival of India—Featuring sitarists Vilayat Khan and Shujaat Khan, tabla player Zakir Hussain, and vocalists Pandit Jasraj and Shobha Gurtu. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Sept. 13 at 8.)

James Brown / Chaka Khan—Now in his sixties, the Godfather of Soul has released more than eighty records—several of them transcendentally great, most of them excellent, and all of them featuring at least one groove that has found its way onto somebody else's record. If a fraction of all the artists who have sampled, borrowed from, or just plain ripped off Brown were to share the wealth, he'd be a very rich man. A while ago, Brown hit bottom, led a few state troopers on a high-speed chase, and spent some time in prison. He seems to have overcome his troubles, and he's back on the road, preaching the funk with a newfound evangelical fervor. / From her trailblazing work with Rufus to her late-eighties hit "I Feel for You," Khan has influenced a whole generation of funk divas with her mercilessly sexy voice. Recently, the quality of her material has slipped, but live she's still a force to be reckoned with. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. 307-7171. Sept. 14 at 3.)

ONLY CONNECT

HMS Beagle (http://biomednet.com/hmsbeagle)—Though this excellent biweekly science site is aimed at biomedical researchers and professionals, it can be accessed (and largely understood) by the lay reader as well. You'll find research news here culled from *Science, Nature, JAMA (the Journal of the American Medical Association)*, and other scientific and medical journals, most of which you can browse just by registering with this site.

While the actual articles can prove tough slogging, the summaries are concise and presented under such sassy headlines as "Meteorites not needed, thank you" (for a *Nature* article taking issue with the theory that dinosaur extinction was the result of a celestial body's smashing into the earth) and "Not again?" (for a *Science* study on the bad things that happened when European weevils were brought to North America to control a nasty wild thistle). Cutting Edge provides a forum for debate on topics of import ("Optimum Mutation Rates in Evolution & Disease"). There are book excerpts, games and puzzles that go way beyond Tetris, and a list of links to Web sites of the day, which range from the arcane ("Candida albicans Information") to the general interest ("The Farm: Mushroompeople," a site "for mycologists and gourmets alike"). In keeping with the recent boom in laboratory pages that provide more than synopses of experiments and offer a place for scientists to exchange information, there's even a Featured Lab Page.

While the Beagle's information may be hard, its tone is friendly; it offers cartoons and even a bit of Shakespeare. To quote the late biochemist Albert Szent-Györgyi, from the site's Dictionary of Scientific Quotations: "Knowledge is a sacred cow, and my problem will be how we can milk her while keeping clear of her horns."

"Radical Jewish Culture"—"Back to Bacharach," an all-Burt affair curated by downtown luminary John Zorn. Program A (at 4) features cellist Erik Friedlander, trumpeter Dave Douglas, accordionist Guy Klucevsek, and pianist Marie McAuliffe; Program B (at 8) presents pianist Anthony Coleman, drummer Joey Baron, guitarist Marc Ribot, and the jazz-funk trio Medeski, Martin, and Wood. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. Sept. 14.)

INXS—In contrast to the swell of expectation that surrounded the return of U2, no one had much hope for "Elegantly Wasted," the latest from these Australian wags. And, sure enough, it bombed. Michael Hutchence still has the voice and the rock-star hair, but this once formidable slice of beefcake now looks oddly like an extra from "Priscilla, Queen of the Desert." (Beacon Theatre. Sept. 16 at 8.)

CLUBS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is always advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Arlene Grocery, 95 Stanton St., between Ludlow and Orchard Sts. (358-1633)—A narrow, dimly lit renovated bodega that's the perfect generic environment for three to five unknown bands each night trying to escape obscurity.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Sept. 12: The bittersweet excellence of pop-jazz singer **KENNY RANKIN.**

Chicago B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—Dedicated to the music of the Windy City. Sept. 12-13: Buddy Guy may be a better-known singer, but **OTIS RUSH** has been nipping at his ankles for more than four decades. Rush is nothing if not intense: his phrasing stings with a lyricism just this side of murderous, and his pledge "I've been wronged, but I won't be wronged again" is just as chilling.

Coney Island High, 15 St. Marks Pl. (674-7959)—Sept. 16: **NADA SURF,** an above-average alternative-rock combo that had a minor hit last year with "Popular," highlights a bill that also features **JOEY RAMONE** and the **BUSH TETRAS.**

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—A comfortable neo-Moroccan bar hidden inside the Time Café. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is a fine spot to take in a show. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (201-798-4064)—Sept. 12: Indie-punk legends **AGNOSTIC FRONT.** The early-eighties garage revival was short-lived, but the **LYRES** (Sept. 13), one of the genre's ablest practitioners, are still around,

Picasso

The Early Years, *1892–1906*

Pablo Picasso, *Lady in Blue* (detail), 1901. Oil on canvas. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid. ©1997 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

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and they'll prove that in the right hands a good riff, a solid beat, and sneering, adenoidal vocals are never tiresome.

MERCURY LOUNGE, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—The MEKONS, the cult faves that wouldn't quit, come back to town Sept. 12-13. Over the past sixteen years, this tenacious Leeds combo has evolved into a fine country-punk outfit with a bawdy sense of humor. Singers Jon Langford and the silken-voiced Sally Timms switch effortlessly from rough-and-tumble rock to heartbreaking ballads. The band's live shows can be sloppy, but they're rarely disappointing.

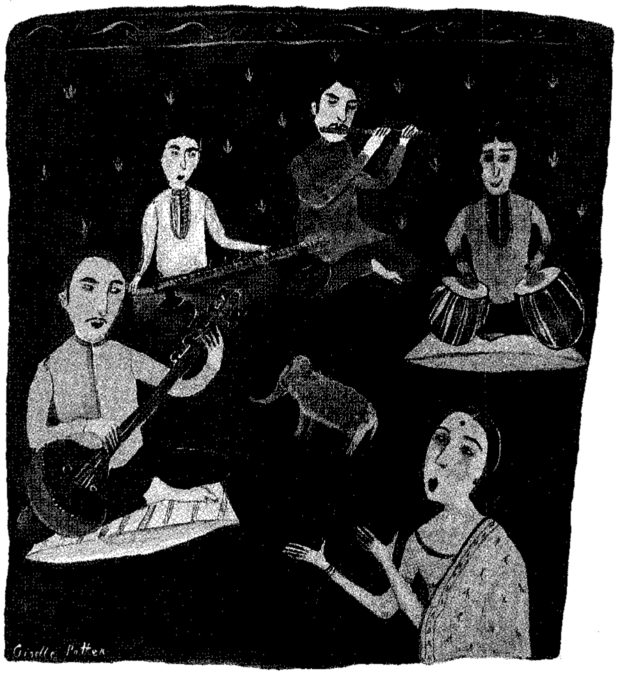
S.O.B.'S, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Hemingway saw ORQUESTA ARAGÓN (Sept. 15) play at the Tropicana during the nineteen-fifties, in Batista's Havana. Now, like some miraculously preserved V-8 wonder from the era of rum cocktails, cigars, and hard-swinging cha-cha-cha, this celebrated and beloved *charanga* band cruises into New York for its first visit in twenty years. The personnel aren't all the stellar originals, of course, and Aragón now has something of the air of a state institution, but it endures as one of the grand ambassadors of Cuba's glorious tradition of rhythm. Dining.

SUPPER CLUB, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—Sept. 11: LUNA. Led by Harvard grad Dean Wareham, who drove Galaxie 500 to college-rock greatness, this New York quartet makes a dreamy kind of music so frankly derivative that it's both disposable and eternal. Sept. 15: 10,000 MANIACS return, without Natalie Merchant (who went solo a few years back) but with the same accomplished, wistful rock sound.

TRAMPS, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Sept. 10: An evening of reggae splendor with STEEL PULSE and Foreign Exchange.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Vocalist JULIE BUDD is at work in the Oak Room through Sept. 27. Dining.



The Music Festival of India, at Carnegie Hall.

BIRDLAND, 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—Sept. 11-13: Vocalist MARK MURPHY. Sept. 16-17: LEE KONITZ is having one of the great third acts in American musical history. The seventy-year-old alto saxophonist is no longer simply the cool instrumentalist with the gossamer tone of the forties and fifties or the often self-conscious experimentalist of the sixties and seventies; he's spent the past two decades fusing his stylistic alter egos. Now his confident manner and singular tone are back, and he's taking more risks than ever, quietly but surely scaling new peaks.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, and a gift shop. Through Sept. 14: THE ELVIN JONES SEVENTIETH-BIRTHDAY BASH. Elvin Jones is seventy? Somebody produce a birth certificate, because this whirlwind drummer is still playing with the energy and imagination of a twenty-five-year-old. Jones deserves to be experienced not merely as a miracle of nature but as an enduringly brilliant jazz innovator. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—Pianist PETER MINTUN is in charge at the Bemelmans Bar.

CITRON 47, at 401 W. 47th St. (397-4747)—A comfy living-room bistro in Hell's Kitchen. The CHUCK WILSON trio is out to show that Monday nights aren't just for big bands. Swing saxophonist Wilson's chamber-jazz threesome includes guitarist HOWARD ALDEN, a master of pre-bop idioms, and bassist MURRAY WALL. Dining.

IRIDIUM, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through Sept. 14: Pianist BILLY TAYLOR, now seventy-five, has played with just about every jazz personage still with us. If by chance he hasn't yet been onstage with any of this week's high-profile guests—Roy Hargrove (Sept. 10), David (Fathead) Newman (Sept. 11), Slide Hampton (Sept. 12), and Frank Wess (Sept. 13)—he can now add them to his list. Mondays belong to electric-guitar innovator LES PAUL.

KNITTING FACTORY, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Sept. 16: BOBBY PREVITE'S LATIN FOR TRAVELERS, a power quartet that lustily exhibits yet another dimension of the super drummer's voracious imagination.

SMALLS, 183 W. 10th St. (929-7565)—Sept. 10: The SAM YAHEL ORGAN QUARTET, featuring guitarist PETER BERNSTEIN and drummer BRIAN BLADE. Sept. 11: The JOE MAGNARELLI sextet. Sept. 12-13: The PETER ZAK quartet, featuring drummer JIMMY COBB. Stocked to the gills with exciting players, the JASON LINDNER BIG BAND holds court every Monday.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Through Sept. 14: The ANDY BEY trio. The man who used to sing Horace Silver's love-peace-and-tolerance lyrics back in the seventies has reinvented himself as an *Über*-romantic. Letting ballads soak luxuriously in his plush tenor voice and setting them off with just-right piano chords, Bey sets a deep-blue mood of languor, longing, and loss. Dining.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The world's most famous jazz club is also the last place in town that still looks and feels like a classic jazz club: subterranean and thick with the spirits of past masters. The TOMMY FLANAGAN trio is in through Sept. 14. Now close to seventy, Flanagan presides over all of jazz piano. Of a poetic cast, he unreels endlessly supple lines, paying them out at whatever speed they demand. He likes to spread the melody out in chords in the first chorus, then compress the song into brand-new single-note improvisations that contain sudden ascending arpeggios, beautiful little countermelodies, and patches of mock double time. The VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA holds sway on Mondays.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. Through Sept. 13: Roy Meriwether (piano), Melissa Slocum (bass), and David Meade (drums). Starting Sept. 15: Pianist MULGREW MILLER and bassist RICHIE GOODS. Dining.

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ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—"Master Hand: Individuality and Creativity Among Yoruba Sculptors," an exhibition of Nigerian masks, containers, figures, and architectural posts which reveals the names and backgrounds of thirty influential artists previously exhibited as anonymous craftsmen. Through March 1. . . . ¶ "Wordrobe," an exhibition at the Costume Institute, explores the use of words, letters, and numbers in fashion, with examples ranging from love notes that fit inside corset stays to an Evans and Wong slip in black Ultrasuede, liberally adorned with quotations from Emily Post's "Do's and Don'ts for the Debutante." Through Nov. 23. . . . ¶ "Georgia O'Keeffe: A Portrait by Alfred Stieglitz" comprises eighty-one photographs of the painter, thirty of which have rarely been exhibited. Through Oct. 5. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—"Toward the New Museum of Modern Art: Sketchbooks by Ten Architects." Through Oct. 7. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 6; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—Selections from the museum's permanent collection are on display. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (423-3500)—The museum is closed for the installation of the Robert Rauschenberg retrospective, which opens Sept. 19.

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—The Keith Haring retrospective gathers early drawings, graffiti, subway posters, large-scale paintings, photographs, videos, and personal memorabilia of the artist, who died in 1990. Through Sept. 21. . . . ¶ "Views from Abroad 3: American Realities." In this series, European curators are asked to rifle through the Whitney's vaults and select a group of pieces which represents their vision of American art. This installment was curated by Nicholas Serota and Sandy Nairne, of the Tate Gallery, in London, and their idea of "American Realities" is far removed from the standard version. Their emphasis is on figuration—Abstract Expressionism, Minimalism, and Conceptualism get short shrift. The one conspicuously vanguard movement they acknowledge is Pop art, which is itself figurative. (It's worth noting that Pop got its start in Britain in the fifties, and that the phrase "Pop art" was coined by a British critic, Lawrence Alloway.) Serota and Nairne have unearthed a curious array of artists, with Raphael Soyer, Philip Evergood, and George Tooker among the better known. This is American art viewed through eyes used to looking at Francis Bacon and Lucian Freud. Through Oct. 5. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St. (769-5100)—"The Lost World: The Life and Death of Dinosaurs." Fossils, time lines, and a re-creation of a paleontological dig, displayed in the shadow of a seventy-foot-long reconstruction of a mamenchisaurus. Through Sept. 30. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—"The Hands of Rodin." More than fifty bronze studies of an extremity the sculptor was quite smitten with. ("There are times," he wrote, "when they seize the void and, molding it as a snowball is molded, hurl it in the face of Fate.") The examples on display are divided into groups ("Hands of Tribulation," "Afflicted Hands," etc.), and many were models for hands in such larger works as "The Gates of Hell" and "The Burghers of Calais." Through Sept. 28. . . . ¶ "Process on Paper: Recent Acquisitions." Prints (Lyonel Feininger, Louise Bourgeois, Vito Acconci), drawings (John Singer Sargent, Kiki Smith), and photographs (Roy De Carava, Lorna Simpson) demonstrate the technical range of works on paper. Through Sept. 28. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 9; and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse (718-681-6000)—"Against the Tide" gathers works by five Chinese-born women artists who take domestic detritus as their medium. Hou Wen Yi, for example, embeds cigarettes and tampon wrappers in handmade paper. Yin Xiuxhen unravels old sweaters and reknits them together. Cai Jin paints banana leaves on mattresses and seat cushions. Through Sept. 14. (Open Wednesdays, 3 to 9; Thursdays and Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

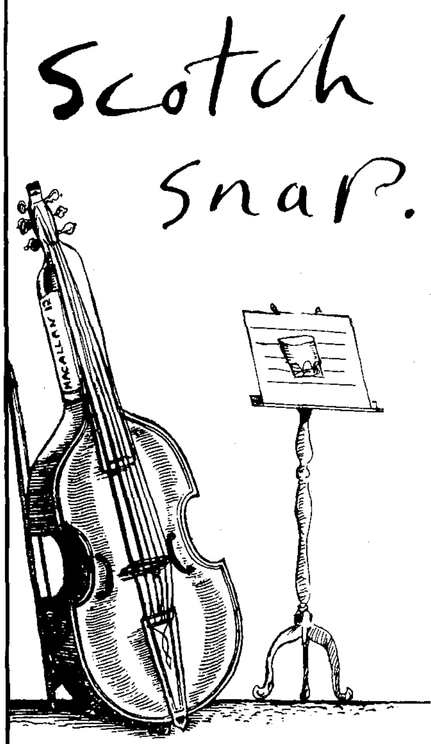
China Institute, 125 E. 65th St. (744-8181)—"Power and Virtue: The Horse in Chinese Art" examines more than two millennia's worth of equine representations (individualized imperial steeds as well as more generalized symbols of temporal and spiritual power), in hand scrolls, album leaves, and sculptures. Opens Sept. 11 and runs through Dec. 13. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5, and Tuesday evenings until 8; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Fashion Institute of Technology, Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (217-5800)—"Driving Fashion: Automobile Fabrics of the 1950s" explores the affinities between women's wear and auto upholstery: examples of auto styling from Detroit's golden era (vinyl bucket seats, in fern with mint-green trim and piping, from the '57 Thunderbird) appear alongside designs of equally forthright color and similarly space-age inspiration by Dior, Norell, and Claire McCardell. Through Oct. 4. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 8, and Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (423-3200)—"Camille Pisarro in the Caribbean, 1850-1855: Drawings from the Collection at Olana" presents plein-air sketches—long thought to be the work of Pisarro's Danish friend Fritz Melbye—of the artist's native St. Thomas and neighboring islands. Through Nov. 16. . . . ¶ "Letters from Cairo: Jews and Muslims 800-1500" marks the discovery a hundred years ago of a cache of medieval manuscripts, many of which appear here: a draft of Moses Maimonides's "Guide to the Perplexed," along with his letter resolving a dispute among *mohels*; a book of helpful magic demonstrating, among other things, how to prevent dog bites; a letter from the bilingual (Hebrew and Arabic) poet Judah ha-Levi, praising a lavish gift—a ream of paper. Through Oct. 12. . . . ¶ The forty-five-foot-long mosaic floor of a fifth-century synagogue in the Galilee, at a site called Sepphoris, has been broken up into slabs and transported here. (Curators at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, which supervised the project, say it's the largest ancient mosaic ever sent out of their country for exhibition.) The museum has created a model installation, surrounding the floor with a breathtaking panoramic photomural of Sepphoris. Through Oct. 12. (Open Sundays through Thursdays, 11 to 5:45, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008)—"Cultural Curios: Literary and Historical Witnesses" presents an assortment of personal items and collectibles, each with its own odd purchase on history: Lord Byron's ring, Lewis Carroll's pocket watch, Thoreau's pencil, a lock of hair from the tail of Robert E. Lee's horse. Through Jan. 4. . . . ¶ "Romanticism to Realism: Nineteenth Century German Drawings" follows the shift in artistic practice from imagination (exemplified by the works of Caspar David Friedrich and Philipp Otto Runge) to reportage (Adolph Menzel). Through Jan. 4. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5; Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St., at Central Park W. (873-3400)—"Before Central Park: The Life and Death of Seneca Village," an exhibition devoted to the African-American and Irish community that was razed to make way



A manuscript from a Conservatoire of Music

Sirs, it may have come to your notice that in music we have a term '*Scotch Snap*'. This usually takes the form of a semiquaver followed by a dotted quaver, a device favoured particularly by baroque composers such as Handel giving a distinctive 'jerky' character to a dance tune.

It has been suggested in the Professors' Common Room that this figure derived its name from the rough liquors of the time which imparted *a sudden jolt to the Scottish tastebuds.*

Today, of course, we have The Macallan Single Highland Malt Whisky, which provides such a delectable legato that the *Scotch* snap has become quite forgotten – except of course in those bars where only baser spirits are jiggered out (in which case, may we suggest a *bar's rest?*).

Yours etc., Ian Curror,

FRCO (CHM), GRSM, ARCM, LRAM *and BAR.*

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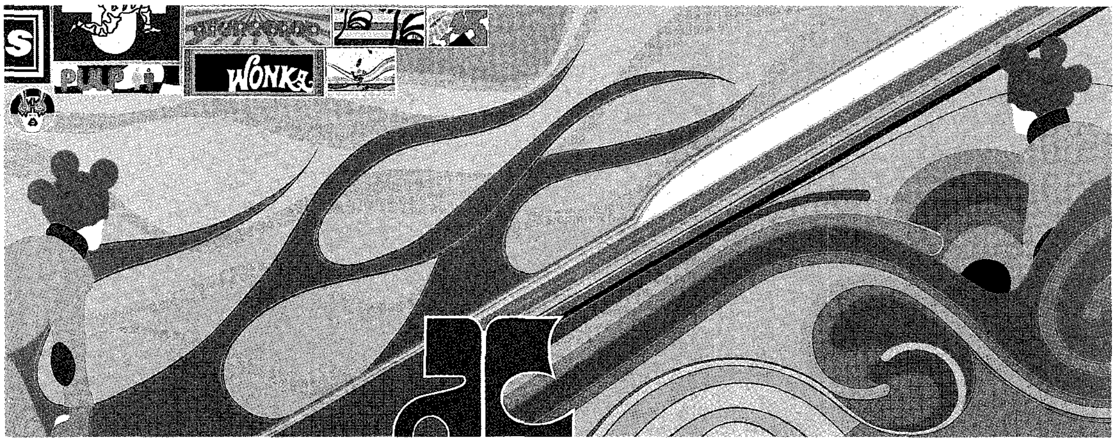
for Central Park, includes a re-creation of one of its streets (85th Street, near Sixth Avenue), histories of some typical residents (Andrew Williams, bootblack; Epiphany Davis, porter), and a reference center at which museumgoers can follow the subsequent genealogies of Seneca Village families. Through Nov. 30. . . . ¶ "The Birds of America," a hundred and fifty watercolors by John James Audubon, the illegitimate son of a French sea captain and a chambermaid, who came to these shores to avoid a Napoleonic conscription. Through Oct. 5. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)



"Giro di Atmosphere," by Michael Bevilacqua (Fredericks).

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. *(869-8089)*—"Visionary Daughters of Albion," a well curated exhibition celebrating the bicentenary of the death of Mary Wollstonecraft, author of "Vindication of the Rights of Woman," and the birth of her daughter, Mary Shelley, author of "Frankenstein." The objects on display include portrait paintings, letters, pamphlets, cartoons, broadsides, and, of course, lots of books, including a splendid copy of the illustrated poem by William Blake which the exhibition's name alludes to. Salomon Room; through Sept. 13. (Open Mondays, and Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, uptown and downtown galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6; Chelsea galleries are generally closed Tuesdays and open Sundays.)

Stanley Boxer—Sculptures, in marble (Cheshire gray, Vermont white, Portuguese rose) and wood (willow, fir) of detailed totems and simple geometric forms. Through Oct. 4. (Salander O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. Open Mondays. 879-6606.)

Cora Cohen—Heavily worked abstract panels, painted on drop cloths or linen, which incorporate urban and industrial detritus. Through Nov. 1. (McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. 319-1996. Open Mondays.)

Judy Glantzman—Self-portraits in oil, with the painter's seven-month-old daughter. Through Oct. 11. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St. 535-8810.)

Kara Hammond—Drawings of homey objects (baseball gloves, bar stools, footie pajamas), many from Montgomery Ward catalogues circa 1950. Through Oct. 4. (Rickards, 1045 Madison Ave., at 79th St. 924-0858.)

Roberto Juarez—Seven large panels and a dozen smaller views based on the painter's perambulations through Old Rome over the past year. Through Oct. 4. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. 980-5454.)

Cynthia Knott—Turneresque panels devoted to elemental vistas of sea, sky, and horizon. Through Oct. 4. (DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 247-2111.)

Holly Lane—Bosch-like allegorical paintings in elaborate hand-carved frames. Through Sept. 27. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. 888-1122.)

Ruth Marten—The former tattooist has created an homage to hair of every description and provenance. Through Oct. 4. (Littlejohn, 41 E. 57th St. 980-2323.)

Silvio Merlino—Landscapes in bright oils, studded with papier-mâché, rubber swim fins, painted T-shirts, etc. Through Oct. 11. (Haime, 41 E. 57th St. 888-3550. Open Mondays.)

Itty Neuhaus—An installation of translucent papier-mâché pods, split open, lighted from within, and loosely linked in a gallery-size net. Through Oct. 7. (Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St. 879-3500.)

Judy Pfaff—"Round Hole, Square Peg," an installation of steel tubing, cedar roots, giant plaster milk drops, and peepholes cut through the gallery walls. Through Oct. 4. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. 752-0124.)

Curtis Phillips—Numinous landscapes in paint and beeswax. Through Sept. 27. (O'Hara, 41 E. 57th St. 355-3330. Open Mondays.)

Sean Scully—Paintings of vertical and horizontal elements in varying scale. Through Oct. 18. (Boone, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 752-2929.)

Season Openers—**albert bierstadt,** Peters, 177 E. 78th St. 628-9760. Opens Sept. 11. . . . **marcel broodthaers,** Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. 977-7160. Open Mondays; opens Sept. 12. . . . **betsy friedman,** Baumgold, 128 E. 72nd St. 861-7338. Opens Sept. 10. . . . **philip guston,** McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 688-5951. Opens Sept. 12. . . . **duane keiser,** Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. 759-2345. Opens Sept. 11. . . . **william lehmbruck** and **joseph beuys,** Werner, 21 E. 67th St. 988-1623. Open Mondays; both shows open Sept. 11. . . . **alfonso ossorio** and **bob thompson,** Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. 247-0082. Both shows open Sept. 11. . . . **andy warhol,** Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. 744-2313. Opens Sept. 11. . . . **steve wheeler,** Snyder, 20 W. 57th St. 262-1160. Opens Sept. 11.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

Anonymous—From the gallery that last season brought off a clever but largely unremarked hoax (hanging a cache of purportedly Jazz Age homoerotic portraits by the apocryphal Bruce Sargeant, which were in fact the recent creations of Mark Beard) comes a series of photocollages by an unnamed artist from the late twentieth century. Through Oct. 12. (Wessel and O'Connor, 242 W. 26th St. 242-8811.)

Michael Bevilacqua—Acrylic-on-canvas paintings of pop images (Kiss paraphernalia, Oasis logos) and characters from children's fiction (Willy Wonka, Harold from "Harold and the Purple Crayon") floating on flames, pinstripes, and other semi-abstractions of a type more often found on customized cars. Through Sept. 27. (Fredericks, 504 W. 22nd St. 633-6555.)

Richmond Burton—Abstract panels by the erstwhile architect. Through Oct. 11. (Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. 242-7727.)

Joachim Koester—"Pit Music," a video that documents a string quartet performing inside an orchestra pit constructed in the gallery, and a series of photographs, "Day for Night, Christiania, 1996," that uses the film technique of the title for snapshots of life in an anarchist enclave in Denmark. Through Oct. 18. (Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. 463-7770.)

Max Mohr / Thomas Nozkowski—Sculptures made of diaphanous fabrics and prostheses. / Untitled abstract paintings. Both shows through Sept. 27. (Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. 633-6999.)

Calvin Seibert / Lee Boroson—As part of his ongoing "Encyclopedia of Twisted Sub-Plots," the artist presents drawings as tear sheets from an apocryphal larger document. / An installation of billowy—and staticky—fabric. Both shows through Oct. 5. (Eller, 529 W. 20th St. 206-6411.)

Joseph Stashkevetch—Large-scale drawings in charcoal and Conté crayon, based on snapshots of the L.A. freeways. Through Oct. 4. (Morris Healy, 530 W. 22nd St. 243-3753.)

Jim Torok / Matt Magee—Small oil-on-wood portraits of the artist's friends. / Meditative emblems and personal arcana painted in a faux-Masonic style. Both shows through Oct. 4. (Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. 741-3318.)

"Very Large Array"—Named for the world's largest movable radio telescope, this group show presents small works by artists who share a preoccupation with scientific technique, mathematical clarity, or technological methods. Through Sept. 30. (Debs, 529 W. 20th St. 674-7080.)

Season Openers—**aziz and cucher,** Shainman, 513 W. 20th St. 645-1701. Opens Sept. 11. . . . **jennifer bartlett,** Kempner, 501 W. 23rd St. 206-6872. Opens Sept. 11. . . . **serena bocchino,** Coploff, 526 W. 26th St. 674-1024. Opens Sept. 12. . . . **roni horn,** Marks, 523 W. 24th St. 243-0200. Opens Sept. 13. . . . **karen kilimnik,** 303 Gallery, 525 W. 22nd St. 255-1121. Opens Sept. 13. . . . **martin kippenberger,** Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. 206-7100. Opens Sept. 13. . . . **jutta koether,** Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. 727-7366. Opens Sept. 13. . . . **brian novatny,** Billis, 526 W. 26th St. 645-2621. Opens Sept. 12. . . . **tam ochiai,** Team, 527 W. 26th St. 279-9219. Opens Sept. 13. . . . **rosemarie trockel,** Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. 206-9300. Opens Sept. 13.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Helen Beckman / Daniel Carello—"Some Monkeys and Some Apes," a suite of blue gouaches executed as though based on extravagant secondhand descriptions of primates. / Three modern couches arranged in such a way as to appear, at first, to be one painting, in perspective, of lake, mountains, and sky. Both shows through Oct. 4. (A/C Project Room, 15 Renwick St. 219-8275.)

Peter Begley—Archetypal renderings of commonplace images (the back of a head, a single high-heeled shoe), done with cave-

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painterly clarity. Through Oct. 4. (Vega, 107 Mercer St. 274-8102.)

Sam Durant / Allyson Strafella—Sculptural furniture, or furnitural sculpture, of chrome-plated steel tubing. / Works on paper, created with a typewriter, and a wall drawing. Both shows through Oct. 11. (Marcus, 578 Broadway. 226-3200.)

Ellen Harvey—Eight freestanding paintings of bedsheets, placed in such a manner as to create a hexagonal room. Through Oct. 4. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 477-8423.)

Elisa Jimenez—A couture collection inspired by Titania, the fairy queen in "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Through Sept. 20. (Holly Solomon, 172 Mercer St. 941-5777.)

Cara Perlman—"Mother's Breath," a huge inflated boulder made of urethane fabric and lit from within, sits atop the Deitch Projects Annex. Through Oct. 4. (18 Wooster St. 343-7300.)

Elizabeth Silver—Drawings and paintings, based on life studies, in a neo-Expressionist style. Through Oct. 4. (DFN, 560 Broadway. 334-3400.)

Darren Waterston—Landscapes, both wild and domestic, in oil and encaustic on wood. Through Oct. 11. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway. 925-3500.)

Frank Webster—Monochromatic paintings of architecture from the industrial Midwest. Through Oct. 4. (Fotouhi Cramer, 560 Broadway. 431-1304.)

Rebecca Welz—Sculptures in Plexiglass which have been repeatedly sanded and stained to achieve their patina. Through Sept. 30. (June Kelly, 591 Broadway. 226-1660.)

Nahum B. Zenil—Paintings, collages, and mixed-medium works by the Mexican artist. Through Nov. 1. (Grey Art Gallery, New York University, 100 Washington Sq. E. 998-6780.)

"Blue"—Paintings, photographs, porcelains, and sculptures that make strong use of the color, including examples by Eggleston, Judd, Miró, and, of course, Picasso. Through Oct. 4. (In Khan, 415 West Broadway. 226-6484.)

"Delta"—An installation by Steve Doughton, consisting of seven nine-minute segments of a single film (a day in the life of Doug, a suburban stoner) projected simultaneously throughout the gallery. Through Oct. 4. (Boesky, 51 Greene St. 941-9888.)

"The Narrative Image"—Work by seven artists, including Polly Becker, Calef Brown, Christian Clayton, and Jonathon Rosen, whose techniques derive in equal measure from the graphic arts and traditional painting. Through Sept. 30. (Ozone, 400 Broome St. 965-1719.)

"The Keehn Collection"—Works from the fifties through the seventies by contemporary artists from India. Opens Sept. 13. (Bose Pacia Modern, 580 Broadway. 966-3224.)

Season Openers—**MARTHA BENZING,** Golden, 39 Wooster St. 274-0080. Opens Sept. 11. . . . **WILLIAM CLUTZ,** Davies, 23 Commerce St. 243-6868. Opens Sept. 10. . . . **KEITH GOODHART,** Cavin Morris, 560 Broadway. 226-3786. Opens Sept. 11. . . . **LORNA SIMPSON,** Sean Kelly, 43 Mercer St. 343-2405. Opens Sept. 12. . . . **RENÉE STOUT,** Steinbaum Krauss, 132 Greene St. 431-4224. Opens Sept. 13. . . . **JORDAN TINKER,** Brownstone, 39 Wooster St. 334-3455. Opens Sept. 11.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

Christie's—An auction of nineteenth-century furniture (including a George III-style giltwood sidebar that reputedly belonged to Stanford White) and porcelain (Sèvres and others). (Park Ave. at 59th St. 546-1000. Sept. 11.) . . . ¶ At **CHRISTIE'S EAST:** Antique and fine jewelry, including numerous pieces by Cartier, Buccellati, Seaman Schepps, and Barry Kieselstein-Cord. (219 E. 67th St. 606-0400. Sept. 11.)

Phillips—An auction of Judaica, including illuminated manuscripts, silver ceremonial pieces, and paintings. (406 E. 79th St. 570-4830. Sept. 10.)

Doyle—Sept. 10: Furniture, decorative art, and paintings. . . . ¶ Sept. 11: Estate jewelry. (175 E. 87th St. 427-2730.)

Swann—A sale of printed and manuscript Americana. (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710. Sept. 11.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Lisette Model (1901-83)—A retrospective of the photographer and teacher's career, from the collection of the International Center of Photography. Through Sept. 19. (PaineWebber Building, Sixth Ave. at 52nd St. 713-2885.)

Marc Riboud—Pictures the globe-trotting French photojournalist shot in China over the past forty years. Through Sept. 14. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. 860-1777. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

"The American Century: Photographs and Visions, Part I"—A selection of images from 1900 to 1935, by artists both well known (Stieglitz, Cunningham, Strand) and obscure (Wilson Alwyn Bentley, J. Walter Collinge). Opens Sept. 11. (Danziger, 130 Prince St. 226-0056.)

"Il Paparazzo/I Paparazzi"—With terribly coincidental timing (the show has been scheduled for months), the Robert Miller gallery launches a mini survey on the celebrity chasers of Rome in the fifties and the subsequent leaching of paparazzi perspectives and techniques into the field of fashion photography. Opens Sept. 10. (41 E. 57th St. 980-5454.)

Season Openers—**STÉPHANE COUTURIER,** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. 226-1220. Through Oct. 18. . . . **GREGORY CREWDSON,** Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St. 219-9600. Through Oct. 4. . . . **KOICHIRO KURITA,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway. 925-5510. Through Oct. 18. . . . **JACQUES LOWE,** Leica, 670 Broadway. 777-3051. Opens Saturdays at noon; opens Sept. 12. . . . **ANA MANDELBAUM,** Ubu, 16 E. 78th St. 794-4444. Opens Sept. 16. . . . **MICHAEL MARTONE,** Ricco/Maresca, 152 Wooster St. 780-0071. Through Oct. 4. . . . **JAVIER SILVA MEINEL,** Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. 223-1059. Opens Sept. 11. . . . **HIROMITSU MORIMOTO,** Morthland, 225 Tenth Ave., at 23rd St. 242-7767. Through Oct. 12. . . . **ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG,** Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 759-7999. Opens Sept. 11. . . . **ALEXANDER RODCHENKO,** Schickler, 560 Broadway. 431-6363. Through Oct. 11. . . . **AARON SISKIND,** Mann, 42 E. 76th St. 570-1223. Opens Sept. 11. . . . **LOUIS STETTNER,** Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. 517-3766. Opens Sept. 11. . . . **ROBERT STIVERS,** Richardson, 560 Broadway. 343-1255. Through Oct. 11. . . . **DONALD SULTAN,** Borden, 560 Broadway. 431-0166. Opens Sept. 11. . . . **TSENG KWONG CHI,** Saul, 560 Broadway. 431-0747. Opens Sept. 10.

(See the museum listings for a photography exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

OPERA

New York City Opera—Opening performances of the season, which continues through Nov. 23 and then picks up again in March: Verdi's **MACBETH,** in a new production featuring soprano Lauren Flanigan and tenor Mark Delavan. (Sept. 11 at 6:30 and Sept. 14 at 1:30.) . . . Rossini's **L'ITALIANA IN ALGERI,** in a hot-pants-era staging originally presented by Glimmerglass Opera. (Sept. 12 at 8.) . . . **THE MAGIC FLUTE,** performed in English. (Sept. 13 at 1:30 and 8.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

Amato Opera—The company's fiftieth season opens with the buoyant good humor of Verdi's "Falstaff," presented in a macaronic version in which the especially talkative parts are sung in English and the more lyrical moments are rendered in Italian. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Sept. 13 at 7 and Sept. 14 at 2:30. Through Oct. 5.)

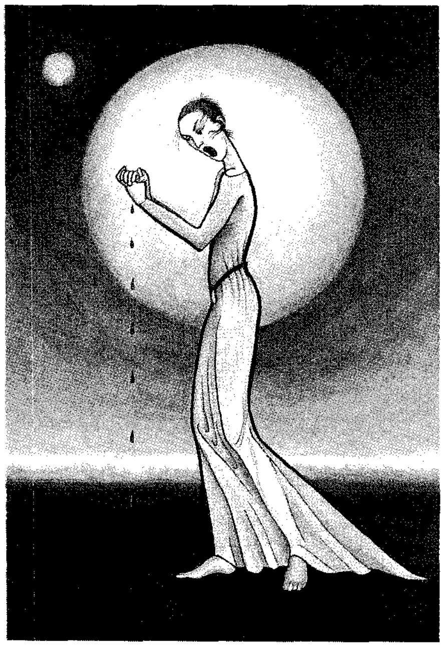
ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Treble Singers—Virginia Davidson directs the women's choir in music by Mendelssohn, Clara Schumann, Louise Talma, and others. (Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, Fifth Ave. at 55th St. Sept. 12 at 8. Admission by contribution.)

Manhattan School of Music Chamber Sinfonia—The orchestra offers the première of Lawrence Widdoes's Variations for Chamber Orchestra, Spohr's Concerto in A Minor for String Quartet and Orchestra (featuring the American String Quartet), and Beethoven's Symphony No. 6 (the "Pastoral"). Glen Barton Cortese conducts. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. Sept. 12 at 8. No tickets necessary. . . . ¶ Wave Hill, W. 249th St. at Independence Ave., the Bronx. 718-549-3200, ext. 229. Sept. 14 at 2.)

Dvořák Day—The Czech nationalist composer Antonín Dvořák was a New Yorker for three years, from 1892 to 1895. During that time he served as director of the National Conservatory of Music of America, at 128 E. 17th Street, and lived with his family several blocks away, in a four-story brownstone at 327 E. 17th Street. There he wrote several works of enduring importance, most notably his Cello Concerto and his Symphony "From the New World." The building was razed in 1991 to made way for an AIDS-treatment facility, in the sad outcome of a misadventure that pitted two well-intentioned groups—historic preservationists and health-care providers—against each other. The preservationists at least managed to memorialize the composer more or less in situ by reclaiming a four-foot-tall bronze statue of him, which had been languishing on the roof of Avery Fisher Hall, and installing it in the northeast corner of Stuyvesant Park, directly across the street from the house where Dvořák lived; it will be officially dedicated at a public ceremony on Sept. 13 at 3. A free all-Dvořák concert will follow at 5, at St. George's Church, on Stuyvesant Square (207 E. 16th St., between Second and Third Aves.). On the program: the composer's G-Major Sonatina and "Humoresque" (with violinist Josef Suk and pianist Lincoln Mayorga); his Terzetto for Two Violins and Viola, with Michael Tree and Arnold Steinhardt (first violinist and violist, respectively, of the Guarneri Quartet, but here switching instruments) joining Mr. Suk; the dramatic overture "Husitska," with Steven Richman conducting the Harmonie Ensemble; and the Symphony "From the New World," with numerous colleagues from other orchestras augmenting the Harmonie Ensemble's ranks.

Jupiter Symphony—Talk about consistency! Jens Nygaard conducts not just an all-Mozart



Lauren Flanigan in "Macbeth," opening New York City Opera's season.

VIRGINIA HATLEY

program, but an all-Mozart program comprising only works in the key of C Major: the Overture to "Die Schuldigkeit des Ersten Gebots," the Piano Concerto No. 13 (K. 415/387b, with Sung-Mi Im), the Andante for Flute (K. 315/285e, with Diva Goodfriend-Koven), and the Symphony No. 36 (the "Linz"). (Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, 152 W. 66th St. Sept. 15 at 2 and 7 and Sept. 16 at 8. For information about tickets, call 799-1259.)

NEW YORK POPS and **TOKYO POPS ORCHESTRA**—Skitch Henderson and Katsuhisa Hattori lead their respective orchestras in an East-meets-West exercise in light music, including many compositions and arrangements by Mr. Hattori. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Sept. 15 at 8.)

CHOIR OF KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE—Saint Thomas Church's Tuesday-evening series opens with Stephen Cleobury directing the acclaimed ensemble in a wide-ranging program of choral classics that includes Handel's coronation anthem "Zadok the Priest"; motets by Giovanni Gabrieli and Brahms; works by the early-English masters Byrd, Weelkes, and Purcell; and twentieth-century compositions by Pärt, Stravinsky, and Britten (his "Festival Te Deum"). In addition, Cambridge organ scholar Robert Quinney performs works by Bach and Dupré on the church's two organs. (Fifth Ave. at 53rd St. 757-7013, ext. 329. Sept. 16 at 7:30.)

RECITALS

"LA PASSION DE JEANNE D'ARC"—A screening of Carl Dreyer's 1928 film classic receives a live underpinning from pianist Tomas Bächli, performing music by Satie. (The Salon, 432 E. 91st St. Sept. 10 at 8. For reservations, call 718-230-3362.)

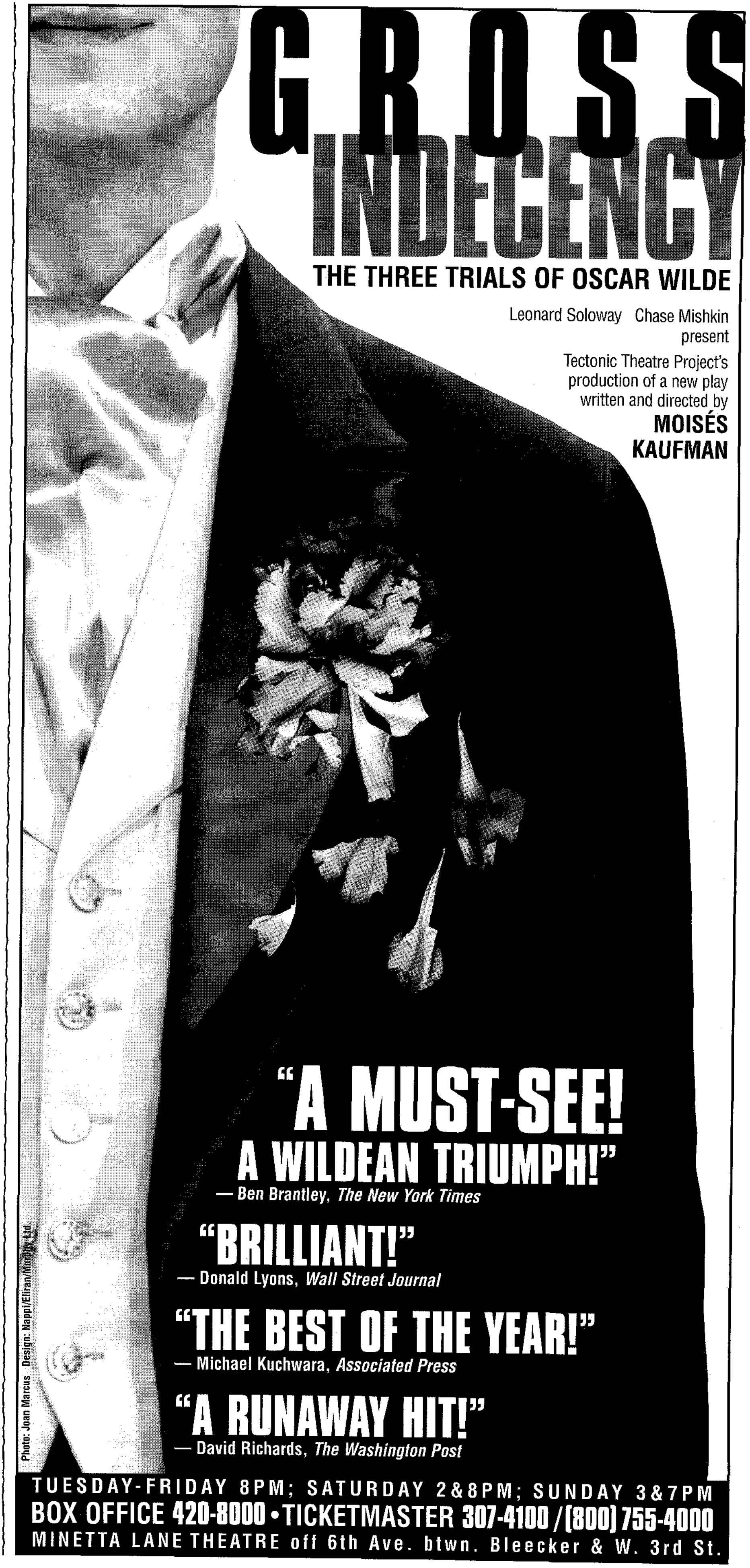
BARGEMUSIC—Violinist Mark Peskanov, cellist Nathaniel Rosen, and pianist André-Michel Schub perform two of the great masterpieces of the piano-trio repertoire: Beethoven's Trio in B-Flat Major (Op. 97, the "Archduke") and Mendelssohn's Trio in D Minor. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061. Sept. 11 at 7:30 and Sept. 14 at 4.)

• •

LISTENING BOOTH

DEEP THOUGHTS ON PLUCKED STRINGS—Between 1994 and 1996, Paul O'Dette realized what must be a lutenist's highest aspiration: he recorded the **COMPLETE LUTE WORKS OF JOHN DOWLAND** (1563-1626). The recent release of the fifth and final volume (Harmonia Mundi 907164) brings the project to a triumphant close. Rather than following a chronological plan (which often proves boring, and in this case would be fraught with musicological difficulties), O'Dette arranged the hundred-odd pieces into richly variegated programs in which introspective fantasies mingle with dance numbers and works dedicated to the composer's friends and patrons (such as "Mistris Whittes thinge" or "Dowlands Adew for Master Oliver Cromwell").

Although the lute operates along a rather narrow spectrum of expressivity, Dowland explored its possibilities as thoroughly as Chopin and Liszt would delve into the piano a couple of centuries later. But his deeper affinity is with Brahms: both were formally conservative, leisurely in their poignant rhapsodizing, and often dark, even tragic. It would be hard to select a favorite from among the five volumes. The first has a leg up for variety of tone, since it features two different lutes plus an orpharion (a related wire-strung instrument). The fifth stresses solo works that may have been originally conceived for chamber forces, and is filled out by several pieces that are probably not by Dowland, though he may have contributed something to their composition. Each volume is a winner, and Harmonia Mundi will issue the entire enterprise as a set in November.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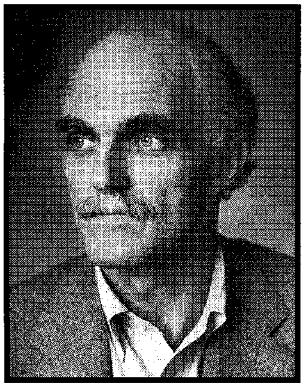

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Quintet of the Americas—The woodwind ensemble performs works by Carter, Villa-Lobos, Roberto Sierra, Karel Husa, Joan Tower, and Annea Lockwood. (American Opera Projects, 463 Broome St. Sept. 12 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Norbert Heller—Performing two piano sonatas by Mozart (both in C Major, K. 279 and K. 545), one by Beethoven (in F Minor, the "Appassionata"), and one by Schubert (in B Major). (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. Sept. 12 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

Chin Kim—Violinist, performing a program of Mozart and Beethoven sonatas, with pianist Yuri Kim. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 718-885-2478. Sept. 14 at noon.)

Nari Matsuura—The pianist performs two separate recitals with slightly overlapping repertoire. Sept. 14 at 6 and 8: Schumann's "Faschingsschwank aus Wien" and "Novelette," as well as works by Liszt. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Sept. 15 at 8: Schumann's "Noveletten," Liszt's Tarantella, and pieces by Chopin. (Mansfield Hotel, 12 W. 44th St. No tickets necessary.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Something Racy—Match sailboat racing comes to New York Harbor Sept. 10-14, when sixteen skippers from around the world, sailing identical J-105 yachts, compete for the Knickerbocker Cup. Peter Gilmour, the current world match-racing champion, Dawn Riley, captaining an all-women team, the Frenchman Marc Pajot, and other America's Cup veterans and future contenders vie for the fifty-thousand-dollar purse. (Races begin daily at 9:30. Good vantage points include Liberty State Park, in New Jersey, Liberty Island, and Ellis Island. For more information, call 203-363-0475.) . . . ¶ More than a hundred vessels (mostly powerboats), some measuring up to a hundred and seventy feet long, will be docked this week at the Chelsea Piers for its second annual in-water boat show. Braveheart, the hundred-sixty-three-foot-long motor yacht belonging to Burt Sugarman, husband of television reporter Mary Hart, will be open to the public as well, and daredevils can take a spin around the harbor on the Piers' fifty-four-passenger, forty-mile-an-hour speedboat, the Gulf Screamer. Bring a towel. (23rd St. and Twelfth Ave. Sept. 11-12, from 1 to 9, and Sept. 13-14, from 11 to 7. For more information, call 336-7873.)

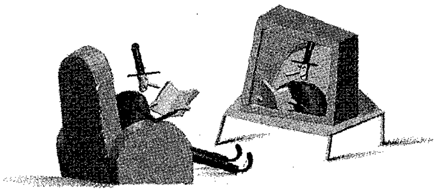
Readings—Sept. 10 at 8: By poet Toi Derricotte, from her collection "The Black Notebooks," Susan Thames, from her novel "I'll Be Home Late Tonight," and Melanie Thernstrom, from "Halfway Heaven," her account of a murder-suicide at Harvard. (National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park S. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Sept. 13 at 5: Studs Terkel reads from "My American Century," his collected interviews. (Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway. No charge beyond museum admission.)

Talks—Sept. 11 at 8: Novelist Maureen Howard, editors Michael Pietsch and Sybil Steinberg, and agent Wendy Weil give the lowdown on literature and the business of publishing. (National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park S. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Sept. 12 at 6:30: Economist Sam Gindin, *Left Business Observer* editor Doug Henwood, business writers Ellen Meiksins Wood and Michael Yates, among others, discuss labor in the age of global capitalism. (Brecht Forum, 122 W. 27th St. 242-4201.) . . . ¶ Sept. 16 at 8:30 A.M.: Random House publisher Harold Evans moderates a discussion between authors Susan Cheever, Pete Hamill, James Salter, Isabella Rossellini, and others on the subject of memoirs. (Fred's at Barneys, 10 E. 61st St. For reservations, which are required, call 940-7480.)

BOOK CURRENTS

Totally Tubular

At the end of every summer, the networks face the task of luring America in from the great outdoors and back in front of the small screen. It's a competitive business; anyone who wonders just how ruthless the competition can get might turn to **Defining Vision** (Counterpoint), Joel Brinkley's recent account of the struggle for control of high-definition-television technology, for a startling view of the industry. Brinkley believes that the TV business has always been rife with the sort of nastiness he relates. Citing David E. and Marshall Jon Fisher's **Tube: The Invention of Television** (Counterpoint), he draws comparisons between the era they covered and his later one: "In both cases there were the same kinds of corporate battles, the same conniving of inventors and scientists and bureaucrats."



MARTIN JARRIE

This desperate hustle has provided many scriptwriters with material for comic fiction. Novels like Roger Director's **A Place to Fall** (Villard) give us writers scrambling to satisfy the orders of crass executives and the whims of egotistical actors. The sitcom-writing duo in Charlie Huack's **Artistic Differences** (out of print) is at the mercy of an actress so obnoxious that she insults the production-company head and gets herself fired. In nonfiction, too, insiders have provided some of the most stinging attacks on the industry—for example, Newton Minow, a broadcasting executive who in 1961, as head of the Federal Communications Commission, made news by calling television a "vast wasteland," and who recently followed up that remark with a book-length attack, **Abandoned in the Wasteland** (co-authored by Craig L. LaMay; Hill & Wang).

In his recent collection of essays, **A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again** (Little, Brown), David Foster Wallace observes that the cynical irony of television has pervaded contemporary culture to an extent that poses "especially terrible problems" for anyone trying to write serious fiction. But if TV often seems like the embodiment of every novelist's nightmare, it's a nightmare with resonance. Without it, George Orwell's **1984** (Viking Penguin) would have no "telescreens" watching people's every move. Nor would Ray Bradbury's **Fahrenheit 451** (Ballantine) have its interactive teledramas, in which viewers read out roles karaoke-style. What else can they do, when all books have been burned?

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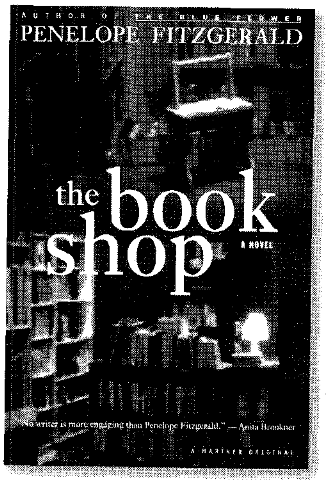
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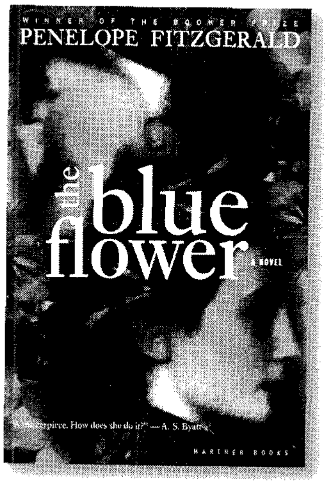
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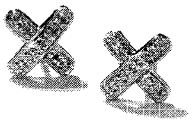

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THE MOVIES

OPENING THIS WEEK

BANDWAGON—Writer-director John Schultz's comic look at a rock-and-roll band trying to make it big. Opening Sept. 12. (Sutton and Village East Cinemas.)

CAPITAINE CONAN—A drama involving a group of First World War guerrillas who, on the eve of the Armistice, are asked to refrain from fighting. Written by Jean Cosmos and Bertrand Tavernier, who also directed. In French. Opening Sept. 10. (Anthology Film Archives.)

DELINQUENT—A film written and directed by Peter Hall, about a fifteen-year-old boy's sexual awakening in the shadow of his abusive father. Opening Sept. 12. (Embassy 3.)

DIFFERENT FOR GIRLS—Director Richard Spence's film explores the romance between a straight man (Rupert Graves) and a transsexual (Steven Mackintosh) who, as boys, were best friends. Opening Sept. 12. (Angelika Film Center and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF GARCÍA LORCA—A thriller directed by Marcos Zurinaga, in which Esai Morales plays a journalist in fifties Spain searching for the person who murdered his hero, the writer Federico García Lorca (Andy Garcia), in 1936. Opening Sept. 12. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Square.)

THE END OF VIOLENCE—Wim Wenders's contemplative drama centers on an action-movie producer (Bill Pullman), his neglected wife (Andie MacDowell), and a surveillance expert (Gabriel Byrne). Opening Sept. 12.

THE GAME—A tycoon (Michael Douglas) receives a birthday gift from his brother (Sean Penn): a game with alarmingly high stakes. Directed by David Fincher. Opening Sept. 12.

LATIN BOYS GO TO HELL—A madcap tale of straight and gay romances, based on a novel by Andre Salas, who adapted it for the screen with the director, Ela Troyano. Opening Sept. 12. (Quad Cinema.)

MY MOTHER'S COURAGE—A film based on events in the life of Elsa Tabori (Pauline Collins), who in 1944 was a Jew living in Budapest. Adapted from writings by her son, the playwright George Tabori, and directed by Michael Verhoeven. In German. Opening Sept. 10. (Film Forum.)

RIDING THE RAILS—A documentary by Michael Uys and Lexy Lovell, about teen-agers who hitched rides on trains during the Depression. Opening Sept. 12. (Cinema Village.)

A SELF-MADE HERO—A comedy about a young man (Mathieu Kassovitz) who, following the Second World War, pretends to have been a member of the Resistance. Directed by Jacques Audiard. In French. Opening Sept. 12. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

FILM NOTES

(If a movie has been reviewed recently in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given.)

AIR FORCE ONE—In Wolfgang Petersen's ludicrous thriller, Harrison Ford plays a red-blooded, two-fisted President who, when Air Force One is hijacked, turns into a business-suited guerrilla, foiling the plans of the ruthless, goateed head terrorist (Gary Oldman). The picture's attempt to satisfy the aggressive fantasies of a graying white-male audience is weirdly fascinating. It's something you don't see every day: a geriatric comic book.—*Terrence Rafferty* (7/28/97) (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and Village Theatre VII.)

CAREER GIRLS—Mike Leigh's new picture follows a pair of former college roommates (Lynda Steadman and Katrin Cartlidge) seeing each other for the first time in six years. Leigh, using frequent flashbacks, appears content simply to alternate the heroines' shared past with their briefly shared present, and to elicit a few casual comic observations from the contrast. The film is generally amiable, but it's hard not to suspect that in this case the director went to work with an idea that was too thin for a feature film and with actors who lacked the versatility to flesh it out.—*T.R.* (8/11/97) (Angelika Film Center, Eastside Playhouse, and Regency.)

CONSPIRACY THEORY—An interminable thriller in which Mel Gibson plays a New York taxi-driver who crams his head, and his apartment, full of evidence of massive conspiracies, one of which turns out to be real. The director, Richard Donner, doesn't have the wit to keep his material at arm's length; he speeds up the editing to make us feel that paranoia is the only possible response to a menacing world. Julia Roberts, as a lustrous and sympathetic lawyer, provides the few bright spots in a dour couple of hours.—*Anthony Lane* (8/18/97) (Chelsea West, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, New York Twin, Olympia, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

CONTACT—Jodie Foster plays Ellie, a scientist of nervous disposition who spends her days listening for radio signals from space. One day, space calls and leaves a message. There's barely a smile, let alone a good laugh, in Robert Zemeckis's boggy movie, unless you count Matthew McConaughey in the richly ridiculous part of a religious thinker.—*A.L.* (7/21/97) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and 19th Street East 6.)

CONTEMPT (1963)—A ravishing new print brightens the glow of greatness that has always surrounded Jean-Luc Godard's willful and obsessive movie. It tells the story of Jerry Prokosch (Jack Palance), a great gaunt monster of a producer, who is putting together a film of the Odyssey; his director, Fritz Lang (playing himself); his screenwriter, Paul (Michel Piccoli); and Paul's wife, Camille (Brigitte Bardot), who falls for Jerry—she is a Penelope who couldn't wait for her wanderer to return. The picture sports the nimbleness of comedy while strolling defiantly in the direction of the tragic, and it emerges, after thirty-four years, as quite inexplicably moving. In French.—*A.L.* (7/7/97) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and The Screening Room.)

COP LAND—A careful, clever, slightly unexciting drama from the young writer and director James Mangold, set in a New Jersey town where most of the citizens are New York policemen. The stars are Harvey Keitel, Robert Patrick, Ray Liotta, Peter Berg, Michael Rapaport, Robert De Niro, and Sylvester Stallone (as the local sheriff, a fat, half-deaf deadbeat). The movie is a kind of high-intensity actors' workshop, but the rhythm is hurried and choppy, as if Mangold, realizing that his film was too ruminative for its own good, had tried to stir it up in the editing.—*A.L.* (8/18/97) (Chelsea Cinemas, Coronet Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Olympia, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 34th Street Showplace, Village Theatre VII, and Ziegfeld.)

FIRE—A rather basic soap opera with a lesbian twist, written and directed by Deepa Mehta. Radha (Shabana Azmi, one of India's premier actresses) is a dutiful wife in a sexless, joyless fifteen-year marriage, and her sister-in-law, Sita (Nandita Das), a beautiful young bride with a cheating cad of a husband. When these two neglected beauties finally get together, the sex is of the good, old-fashioned, romance-novel variety. But not much happens that you couldn't see coming a hundred miles away.—*Sarah Kerr* (Quad Cinema.)

Fire Down Below—An environmental thriller, starring Steven Seagal as an E.P.A. agent and Kris Kristofferson as a mining tycoon. Also with Marg Helgenberger and Stephen Lang. Directed by Felix Enriquez Alcalá, from a screenplay by Jeb Stuart and Philip Morton. (Chelsea West, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and Village Theatre VII.)

The Full Monty—An amiable light comedy, directed by Peter Cattaneo, about six unemployed British steelworkers who mount an all-male strip show for cash. The script, by Simon Beaufoy, is clean and well developed. Each character is given his bit to do, and when the motley crew comes together the actors all work wonderfully with one another, finding a sexy, warm performance rhythm as they gyrate to some classic seventies disco. Two actors—Mark Addy, who plays an overweight, insecure worker, and Robert Carlyle, as the ringleader—are sensational.—*Bruce Diones* (Angelika Film Center, Coronet Cinemas, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

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FRANÇAISE.

Opening Sept. 12, Mathieu Kassovitz in "A Self-Made Hero."

ALAIN PILON

G.I. Jane—Ridley Scott's pushy, rousing, and often splendidly misjudged movie stars Demi Moore as Jordan O'Neil, a lieutenant in naval intelligence who, under the unreliable aegis of a ball-breaking senator (Anne Bancroft), becomes the first woman to undergo SEAL training, most of which consists of being pushed into the water. Nobody expects (or even wants) her to succeed, but the rules that govern Hollywood are even more inflexible than military law, so we know perfectly well that she'll make it. The movie feels like an odd mixture of video game, army-recruitment commercial, and supremely demanding workout video—when Jordan isn't crawling through an obstacle course, she likes to relax with a few hundred pushups. Viggo Mortensen plays the statutory mean bastard who trains the recruits.—*A.L.* (9/8/97) (Chelsea West, 84th Street Sixplex, 86th Street East Twin, Embassy 2, Gotham Cinema, Murray Hill Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas.)

Gravesend—Writer-director Salvatore Stabile's début film focusses on four Brooklyn friends who are trying to get rid of a corpse. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Angelika Film Center.)

Guantanamera—Juan Carlos Tabio and the late Tomás Gutiérrez Alea teamed up to direct this picaresque road trip across present-day Cuba. Riding in one car are a sad, beautiful woman (Mirtha Ibarra) and her awful husband (Carlos Cruz); riding in a truck nearby is a farmer (Jorge Perugorria) who once knew the beauty and still carries a torch for her. But the best shots simply look out through the windshield and capture life along the Cuban highway with a haunting combination of wit and despair. In Spanish.—*S.K.* (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Hercules—The new Disney animated adventure feels secondhand: the youthful hero is an obvious retread of Aladdin, and the scary ambush sequence is set in exactly the same kind of valley that trapped Simba in "The Lion King." The only good news is the presence of James Woods as the voice of evil. Otherwise, the picture is distinguished only in its unblushing will to sell itself and its spinoff products.—*A.L.* (7/7/97) (Guild.)

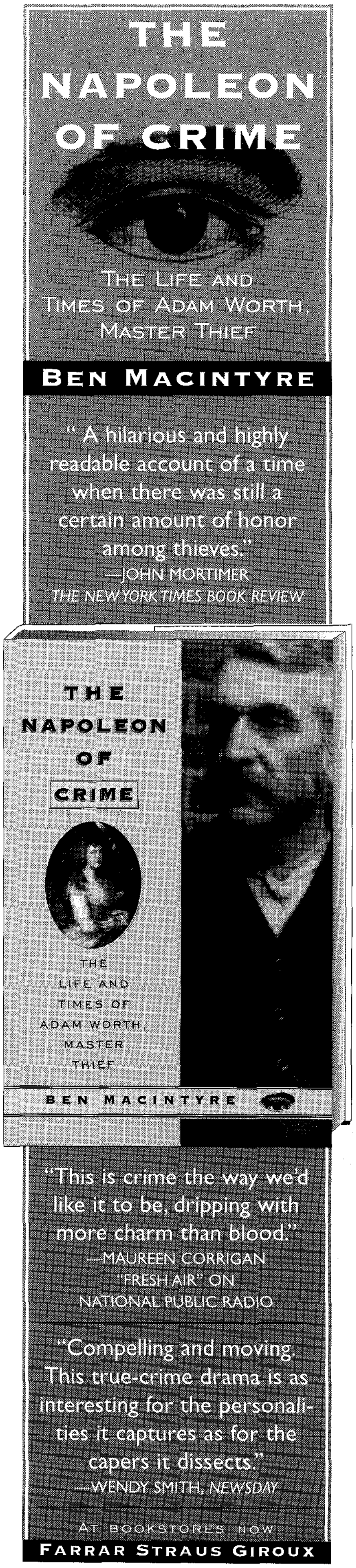
Hoodlum—The story of the struggle between Ellsworth (Bumpy) Johnson (Laurence Fishburne) and Dutch Schultz (Tim Roth) for control of the numbers racket in thirties Harlem. With Andy Garcia as Lucky Luciano. Directed by Bill Duke. (Astor Plaza, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Metro Cinema, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Showplace, and Waverly.)

In the Company of Men—In Neil LaBute's audacious first film, two executives (Aaron Eckhart and Matt Malloy) come up with a plan to date a deaf secretary (Stacy Edwards) and then dump her. If LaBute's sole purpose had been to show off these two misogynists, the film would be a pretty tasteless affair, but the twists of the plot turn it into a black-hearted examination of power and manipulation, as dark and as uncomfortable to watch as the best of Mamet.—*B.D.* (Angelika Film Center, Cinema 3rd Avenue, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Jour de Fête (1950)—The tall, ungainly director and comedian Jacques Tati is the postman who attends the village fair and sees a documentary on the advanced, mechanized American postal system. He is overcome with enthusiasm for speed, and though he has no helicopter, he has his bicycle. He takes off, and what happens is unpredictable, even if you've already seen the movie—it's all so odd you forget it. Written by Tati and Henri Marquet. It's not silent (it has sound effects and music), but it's not in French, either; Tati has devised a kind of unintelligible yet expressive gibberish.—*Pauline Kael* (Film Forum 2; starting Sept. 12.)

Kiss Me, Guido—A dumb lug (Nick Scotti) from Arthur Avenue, in the Bronx, goes to Manhattan and, through a series of mishaps, moves in with a gay man (Anthony Barrile). Tony Vitale's blunt attempt at lighthearted comedy tries hard to sell itself as a slice of New York life, but only Craig Chester, in the role of Barrile's hip, take-action friend, gives a performance out-there enough to enliven the tired script.—*B.D.* (Chelsea Cinemas and Lincoln Square.)

Love from a Stranger (1937)—A neat little thriller, featuring Basil Rathbone as a cold-eyed killer with charming drawing-room manners. By the time the killer's bride (Ann Harding) realizes what she has married, and sits down to dinner with her husband knowing that the servant has been sent off, the doors are locked, and they are alone together in a remote cottage, it is very scary. Made in England, with Rowland V. Lee directing.—*P.K.* (Museum of Modern Art; Sept. 16.)



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—WENDY SMITH, *NEWSDAY*

AT BOOKSTORES NOW
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Men in Black—Barry Sonnenfeld's science-fiction comedy is indolent, confident, and shy of risks. Tommy Lee Jones (very cool) and Will Smith (speedy and high-spirited) play government agents who spend their days policing the activities of resident aliens; whenever the camera wanders away from them, your attention goes with it. Even Linda Fiorentino, as a horny medical examiner, feels irrelevant to the action.—*A.L.* (7/7/97) (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, 64th and 2nd, and Village Theatre VII.)

Mimic—An eerie and well-paced creature feature by the Mexican director Guillermo Del Toro, about some genetically mutated killer superbugs who dwell in the tunnels of Manhattan's subway system, impersonating humans. Mira Sorvino (beautiful but colorless) and Jeremy Northam (beautiful, with color) are the scientists who set about combatting the giant insects, and Del Toro puts them through the paces of a standard thriller screenplay with masterly skill. The movie is moodily staged and gorgeously photographed—rich black shadows and copper-hued tunnels—and it has some genuinely creepy moments. It also cheats quite a bit. (The picture itself is a mimic of the ''Alien'' flicks.) Although the ending is a letdown, Del Toro creates a sense of dread that has an old-style Universal Pictures horror kick.—*B.D.* (86th Street East Twin, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, State, and Village East Cinemas.)

Mrs. Brown—Queen Victoria (Judi Dench), in mourning for her husband, Prince Albert, is reassured, and then comforted, by John Brown (Billy Connolly), who had worked for Albert. Over time, the Queen's private secretary (Geoffrey Palmer) and her Prime Minister, Disraeli (Antony Sher), become alarmed by the growing intimacy between monarch and manservant. The director, John Madden, could have set this up as a minor tragedy, but he has the wit, especially in the first half, to play it cool and droll, and he is helped no end by a series of finely gauged performances.—*A.L.* (8/4/97) (Angelika Film Center, Carnegie Hall Cinemas, and Cinema II.)

Mouth to Mouth—A comedy about an actor (Javier Bardem) who takes a job as a phone-sex operator. Also with Aitana Sánchez-Gijón and María Barranco. Directed by Manuel Gómez Pereira. In Spanish. (Quad Cinema and 62nd & Broadway.)

My Best Friend's Wedding—In P. J. Hogan's romantic comedy, a writer (Julia Roberts) learns that her former lover and current best friend (Dermot Mulroney) is engaged to be married; she suddenly realizes that she's in love with him and resolves to sabotage the nuptials by any means necessary. For the first hour or so, Roberts's enthusiastic, sexy clowning energizes the picture, but then the filmmakers spoil our enjoyment: they allow dull good sense to triumph over their star's outsized appeal. Also with Cameron Diaz and Rupert Everett.—*T.R.* (6/16/97) (First & 62nd Cinemas and Lincoln Square.)

Next Time We Love (1936)—Margaret Sullavan and James Stewart are magnetic together in this story of two careers that don't mesh. She's an actress and he's a war correspondent, and despite their love for each other their marriage doesn't work. The movie is unusually delicate and touching. This first pairing of Sullavan and Stewart is memorably romantic. In some scenes she seems miraculous, and though his line readings aren't up to hers, he's remarkably good—he's even sensual here. Directed by Edward H. Griffith, from a script by Melville Baker and (uncredited) Preston Sturges.—*P.K.* (Walter Reade Theatre; Sept. 12-13.)

Picture Perfect—In Glenn Gordon Caron's romantic comedy, Jennifer Aniston plays a workaholic advertising executive who asks a sweet cameraman (Jay Mohr) to pose as her fiancé; the result, of course, is that they fall in love for real. Aniston and Mohr display real charm, but the cluttered, meandering, feeble script works overtime to hide it. With Olympia Dukakis as a hysterical mother and Kevin Bacon as an office Casanova.—*S.K.* (Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

Shall We Dance?—A middle-aged Japanese businessman (Koji Yakusho) sees a young woman standing at a high window; in an act of admirable folly, he tracks her down and finds that she is a dance teacher. He therefore learns to dance—initially in order to be near her, and then, more surprisingly, because he starts to enjoy himself. Masayuki Suo has written and directed a comedy that exerts a cool and slightly mysterious charm. In Japanese.—*A.L.* (Angelika Film Center, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 72nd Street East.)

She's So Lovely—Maureen (Robin Wright Penn) is married to Eddie (Sean Penn), though since they spend most of their time drunk, missing, broke, or simply broken it's kind of hard to tell. Finally, Eddie shoots someone and is put away. Ten years later he comes back and discovers that his beloved wife is married to Joey (John Travolta)—well, these things happen—who has supposedly brought her happiness and normality, although even he seems a bit of a thug.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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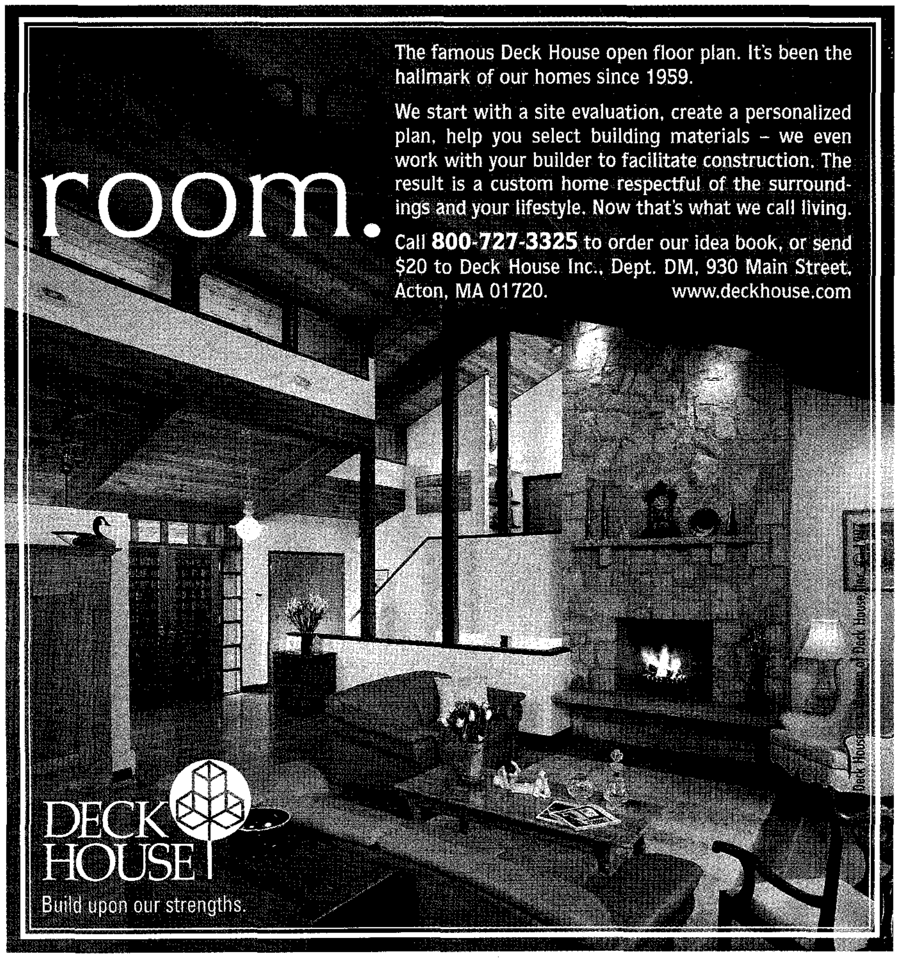
(For show times, call 777-FILM, except where noted.)

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110).
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Carnegie Hall Cinemas, Seventh Ave. between 56th and 57th Sts.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinema I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema 3rd Avenue, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St.
Coronet Cinemas, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Criterion Center, Broadway at 44th St.
East 85th Street, First Ave. at 85th St.
Eastside Playhouse, Third Ave. at 55th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
86th Street East Twin, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Embassy I, Broadway at 46th St.
Embassy 2, 3, and 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
Gotham Cinema, Third Ave. at 58th St.
Guild, 33 W. 50th St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St. (757-2280).
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Manhattan Twin, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Metro Cinema I and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
National Twin, Broadway at 44th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
Regency, Broadway at 67th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
State, Broadway at 45th St.
Sutton I and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th St. East, 241 E. 34th St.
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Waverly I and 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth Aves.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.



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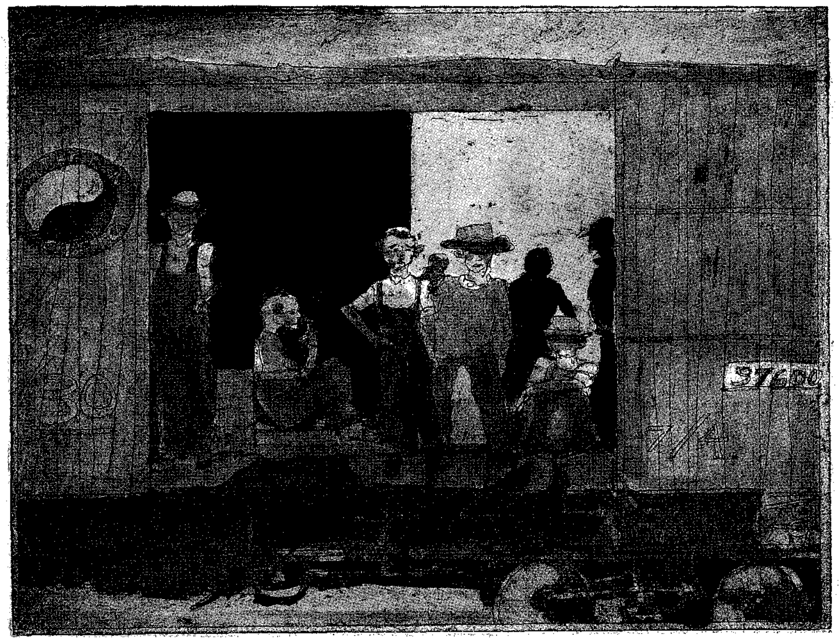
The picture, directed by Nick Cassavetes, from a script by his late father, John, is a gruelling exercise in anti-pleasure. And the title is a lie: although it may be ungallant to say so, she isn't lovely in the least. She's a complete pain.—*A.L.* (9/8/97) (Chelsea Cinemas, Cinema I, Embassy 1, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Showplace, and Village East Cinemas.)

Sunday—Director Jonathan Nossiter's drama about the chance meeting of an out-of-work actress (Lisa Harrow) and a homeless man (David Suchet). (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Film Forum 3.)

(1936, Carol Reed). . . . Sept. 12 at 6 and Sept. 13 at 1: "An Ideal Husband" (1947, Alexander Korda). . . . Sept. 12 at 8 and Sept. 13 at 3: "Oscar Wilde" (1959, Gregory Ratoff). . . . Sept. 13 at 5: "Salome's Last Dance" (1987, Ken Russell). . . . Sept. 14 at 3 and Sept. 16 at 6: "Gaslight" (1940, Thorold Dickinson). . . . Sept. 14 at 5 and Sept. 15 at 2:30: "Pygmalion" (1938, Anthony Asquith and Leslie Howard). . . . Sept. 14 at 5 and Sept. 15 at 6: "How He Lied to Her Husband" (1930, Cecil Lewis). . . . Sept. 16 at 2:30: "Loyalties" (1933, Basil Dean) and "Love from a Stranger" (†).



Opening Sept. 12, Michael Uys and Lexy Lovell's "Riding the Rails."

ROBERT ANDREW PARKER

ALSO PLAYING

EVENT HORIZON: First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, State, and Waverly. . . . **EXCESS BAGGAGE:** Embassy 4, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **THE KEEPER:** Quad Cinema. . . . **KULL THE CONQUEROR:** Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, National Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and 34th St. East. . . . **LAWRENCE OF ARABIA:** Paris. . . . **LEAVE IT TO BEAVER:** Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, National Twin, and Orpheum VII. . . . **A LIFE APART:** Quad Cinema. . . . **LOVE SERENADE:** Carnegie Hall Cinemas, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **MONEY TALKS:** Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, Orpheum VII, 19th Street East 6, Sutton, and Village Theatre VII. . . . **NIGHT FALLS ON MANHATTAN:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **A SMILE LIKE YOURS:** Beekman and East 85th Street. . . . **TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE: THE NEXT GENERATION:** Criterion Center and Village East Cinemas.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—A program of films starring Pam Grier. Sept. 10: "The Big Doll House" (1971, Jack Hill) and "The Big Bird Cage" (1972, Hill). . . . Sept. 11: "Bucktown" (1975, Arthur Marks) and "Original Gangstas" (1996, Larry Cohen). . . . ¶ From Sept. 12: "Jour de Fête" (†).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of films adapted from British stage productions. Sept. 11 at 2:30: "Edward II" (1991, Derek Jarman). . . . Sept. 11 at 6: "A Man for All Seasons" (1966, Fred Zinnemann). . . . Sept. 12 at 2:30 and Sept. 14 at 1: "Laburnum Grove"

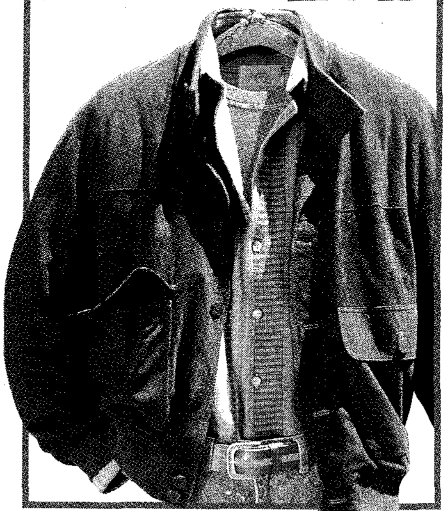
Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (875-5600)—A program of films directed by Frank Borzage and/or starring Margaret Sullavan. Sept. 10 at 2, 5:30, and 8:50: "After Tomorrow" (1932). . . . Sept. 10 at 3:30 and 7: "The Moon's Our Home" (1936, William Seiter), with Sullavan. . . . Sept. 11 at 2 and 6: "So Ends Our Night" (1941, John Cromwell), with Sullavan. . . . Sept. 11 at 4:20 and 8:20: "A Farewell to Arms" (1932). . . . Sept. 12 at 2, 6, and 9:45 and Sept. 13 at 6 and 9:45: "Little Man, What Now?" (1934), with Sullavan. . . . Sept. 12-13 at 4 and 8: "Next Time We Love" (†). . . . Sept. 14 at 4 and 7:40 and Sept. 15 at 2 and 6: "Moonrise" (1948). . . . Sept. 14 at 5:50 and Sept. 15 at 4 and 7:50: "No Sad Songs for Me" (1950, Rudolph Maté), with Sullavan. . . . ¶ Sept. 13 at 2: "The Leopard Son" (1996, Hugo van Lawick). . . . ¶ Sept. 14 at 2: "Atlantis" (1991, Luc Besson).

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363)—A program of films from Hong Kong, all in Cantonese. Sept. 10: "The New Legend of Shaolin" (1994, Wong Jing) and "The Blade" (1995, Tsui Hark). . . . Sept. 11: "Bullet in the Head" (1990, John Woo) and "The Log" (1996, Derek Chiu Sungkei). . . . ¶ From Sept. 12: "Riding the Rails" (1997, Michael Uys and Lexy Lovell) and "Wild Boys of the Road" (1933, William Wellman), with Frankie Darro and Rochelle Hudson.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Sept. 13-14 at 2: "Permanent Vacation" (1980, Jim Jarmusch). . . . Sept. 13-14 at 4: "Stranger Than Paradise" (1984, Jarmusch).

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St.—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Sept. 14 at 7, the feature will be "A Woman's Face" (1941, George Cukor), with Joan Crawford.

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—Sept. 12-16 at 9:30: "Bitter Moon" (1992, Roman Polanski).



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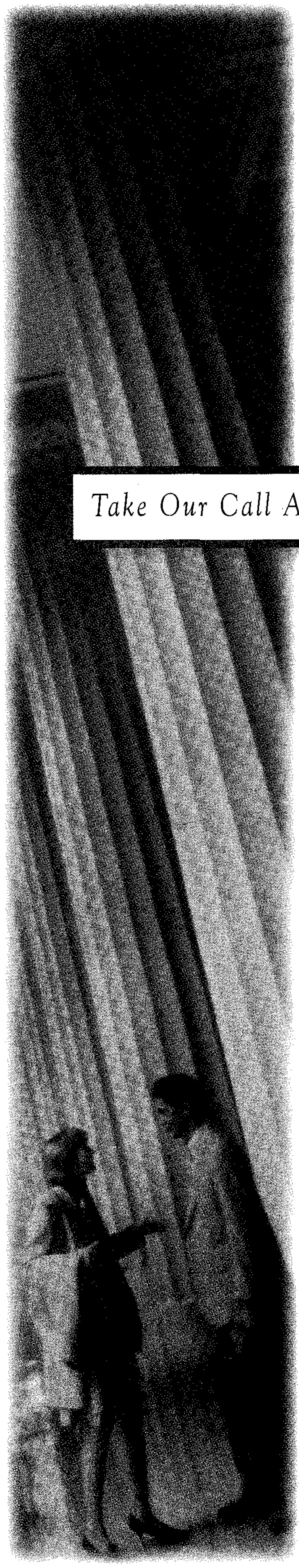

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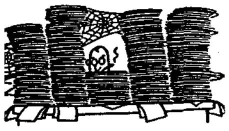
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

INK

Is the game between Buckingham Palace and Fleet Street over?



The newsroom of the *Sun*, Britain's biggest-selling daily newspaper, was a gloomy place last Monday afternoon as the serried ranks of Rupert Murdoch's favorite tabloid battalion monitored the latest news from Paris. For two days, the newspaper had been under siege—by politicians, by other newspapers, by its own readers. Nearly four million Britons buy the *Sun* every day, attracted by its salacious news coverage, witty headlines, and topless page-three girls, but many of these readers were now angrily calling the newsdesk. The message they wanted relayed to the editor, Stuart Higgins, was "You killed her, you bastards."

Higgins, a low-key Murdoch veteran, is known for his imperturbable manner, but this level of abuse was a serious matter even to the most phlegmatic of editors. In an editorial that morning, entitled "Don't Blame the Press," Higgins gently pointed out that Diana had perished hundreds of miles away, with not a British lensman in sight. Yet every time *Sun* staffers ventured outside the building they risked being pilloried. Even Arthur Edwards, the paper's veteran royal photographer, a fifty-seven-year-old Londoner who prided himself on his friendly relationship with Diana, had been attacked while taking photographs of the crowds holding vigil at Kensington Palace. "Old Arthur, who has never been on a motorbike in his life, got a real bollocking off an old dear in a blue rinse," a *Sun* reporter told me.

Then a Reuters bulletin dropped from Paris. Tests had revealed that the driver of the Princess's vehicle, Henri Paul, had blood-alcohol levels well above the legal limit when the car crashed. "It was as if a huge wind had swept through the office," the *Sun* reporter said. "Everybody was saying, 'Thank God for that drunk Frenchman. We are off the hook.'"

The relationship between Buckingham Palace and Fleet Street is an old and corrupt one. For much of this century, the court correspondents were virtual captives of the Crown, travelling to far corners of the empire with the Royal Family and dutifully filing obsequious drivel. Most notoriously, the British press did not report the details of the relationship between Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson until just weeks before the King's abdication. In return for such fealty, the Crown sometimes conferred honorific titles upon the newspapers' proprietors, who included the North American arrivistes William Waldorf Astor and Baron Beaverbrook.

Like much else on Fleet Street, this cozy system changed forever with the arrival of Rupert Murdoch, an Australian interloper with few social ambitions and little love for the British monarchy. In the late nineteen-seventies, Murdoch's tabloids the *Sun* and the *News of the World* adopted a new type of royal coverage. The *Sun* appointed a royal reporter, Harry Arnold, but didn't have him accredited as an official court correspondent and assigned him to dig up some real stories. In September, 1980, he obliged with a belter: the news that Prince Charles had taken up with a nineteen-year-old girl named Lady Diana Spencer. The era of royal scoops had begun.

In this competitive new world, the tabloid editors quickly discovered a simple law: When Diana appeared on the front page, sales went up; when she didn't, they fell. According to Peter Chippindale and Chris Horrie, two journalists who wrote a book about the *Sun* entitled "Stick It Up Your Punter!," Higgins's predecessor, Kelvin MacKenzie, ordered up a front-page royal story for every Monday, declaring, "Don't worry if it's not true—so long as there's not too much of a fuss about it afterwards." Murdoch, the pair wrote, "regarded the Royals show as a symbol of everything that was wrong with the Poms [the British]. They represented the peak of the class system and unearned and unproductive wealth. In their own way they were just as bad as the trade unions—the ultimate closed shop. MacKenzie, who had no strong feelings about them, treated them rather like partridges—dumb creatures to be kept in good health so that they could be shot down whenever he felt like it.... The paper's photographers rudely called them 'The Germans' and described taking their pictures as 'whacking the Germans.'"

In a sense, the events in Paris were a logical culmination of Fleet Street's decision to treat "Chuck and Di" as salable commodities. In 1982, Edwards used a telephoto lens to photograph a pregnant Diana sunbathing in the Caribbean. Just months before, the royal press officer had invited Fleet Street editors to the Palace and asked them to back off. MacKenzie hadn't even gone. In the sixteen years since that snub, the Royals and the public have witnessed a pitiful series of attempts by Fleet Street to police itself and an equally pitiful series of threats by the British government to introduce privacy

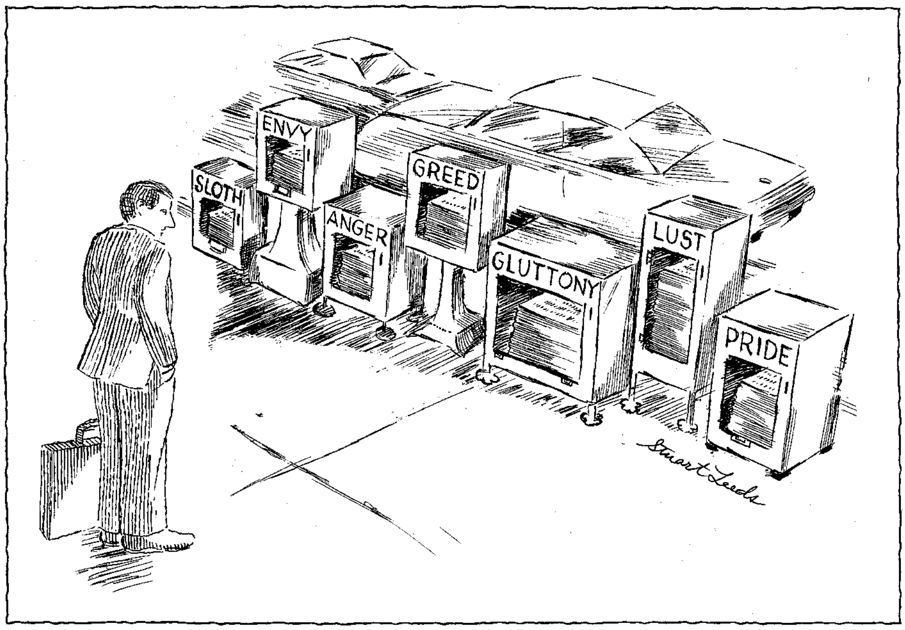
ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

legislation. Meanwhile, the stream of intrusive images have continued: Diana's elder son, William, peeing; Diana visiting her therapist; Diana looking fat; Diana looking thin; and so on.

In April, 1995, the *News of the World* published a front-page story headlined "Di's Sister in Booze and Bulimia Clinic." The story actually centered on one of Diana's sisters-in-law, Victoria Lockwood, who was photographed walking around the grounds of a private clinic. Newspaper owners had recently introduced an eighteen-point Code of Practice for Fleet Street journalists, and those photographs, taken with a telephoto lens, without Lockwood's permission, were in clear violation of it. The Press Complaints Commission, charged with upholding the Code, faulted the editor of the *News of the World*, a cherubic thirtysomething named Piers Morgan. More surprisingly, Rupert Murdoch publicly castigated his own editor. "The young man went over the top," he said, and added, "I have reminded Mr. Morgan forcefully of his responsibility to the Code to which he as editor—and all our journalists—subscribe in their terms of employment."

Naïve observers assumed that this incident would prove to be the end for Morgan, but they were mistaken. He is now the editor of the *Daily Mirror*, the *Sun's* main rival. A few weeks ago, he published a front-page picture of Diana and Dodi Fayed that had been digitally altered in order to make it appear that the couple were kissing when in fact they were feet apart. The next day, the *Mirror's* sister paper, the *Sunday Mirror*, printed a grainy but genuine shot of Diana and Dodi embracing on his father's yacht. That picture, which was reprinted around the world, reportedly cost the *Mirror* a quarter of a million pounds, and it sparked the paparazzi stampede that was to end in a tunnel near the Seine.

Most Fleet Street journalists will admit, in private at least, that the tabloids do bear some blame for Diana's death. But many also feel that the Princess was guilty of encouraging the media circus that surrounded her. On one occasion, after the *Sun* printed the photographs of her in the Caribbean, she ran across Arthur Edwards and asked him if he had made a lot of money from the pictures. No, he said, just his regular salary. To which the Princess replied, "Oh, pass the Kleenex."



Thirty million Britons, half the population, read a tabloid every day, and in the past week the editors have been giving them memorial editions, special sections, and endless Diana hagiography. Rupert Murdoch was in London last week orchestrating his newspapers' coverage. The *Sun* has changed its red logo to black, and it has given the page-three girls the week off.

Given all this, it was easy to forget that just a couple of weeks earlier there had been signs that some of the media might be starting to turn against Diana. Last month's interview with *Le Monde*, in which she called the British press "ferocious" and said that she would have left the country if it weren't for her children, did not go down well with many commentators. "But nobody has really gone against Diana, because they know it doesn't sell," one tabloid executive told me. "Everybody loved her, especially the proletariat. She took the kids to Thorpe Park"—an amusement park. "She made them wear baseball caps. When they were with Charles, they were shooting grouse and wearing kilts. So nearly everybody on Fleet Street stayed on her side, even though a lot of people here thought she was off her rocker."

Despite Diana's death, the Fleet Street charade continues. Last week, Lord Wakeham, the former Tory minister who is chairman of the Press Complaints Commission, announced that he was holding urgent discussions with editors about the use of paparazzi photographs. "There is no better man in the country than Lord Wakeham at appearing to be addressing everybody's concerns and taking action but in reality to be kicking the issue into the long grass, which is what we all want," one senior Fleet Street figure told me. Many journalists believe that the whole issue is moot, because the new Labour government has shown no more enthusiasm for taking on the media proprietors, especially Murdoch, than did its Conservative predecessors. "There is still quite a lot of good will on Fleet Street toward the government," one political editor told me. "Blair knows that that would change very rapidly if he did something that the press really resented."

Meanwhile, most tabloid editors and reporters are concerned with a more immediate problem: what to fill their papers with. "Diana was ninety-five per cent of our reason for covering the Royals," a *Sun* reporter told me. "Without her, who gives a fuck about the Windsors?"

—JOHN CASSIDY

DEPT. OF SECOND THOUGHTS

What women talk about when they talk about Princess Diana.

ONE of the paradoxes of the Princess of Wales's death is the impact that it has had on those of us who paid minimal attention to her, who have an élitist disdain for the cult of celebrity, and who use ice tongs to carry copies of *People* to the trash can. I've talked to many women of that kind in the past three days—storekeepers, a hairdresser, a psychiatrist, a left-leaning political activist, a professor of philosophy, all of us over fifty—and found that their reaction to last weekend's events was very similar to mine.

All Sunday and Monday, women friends called. We discussed the sadness of it, and why we were so upset, we veterans of the causes of the sixties and seventies, we snooty star-bashers who had been dismayed by much about Diana's life—the glitzy clothes, the shallow glamour of her social set, the appalling sums spent on self-improvement therapies. As "progressive" feminists, we'd lumped her and her friends into a world that for years we'd arrogantly scorned, and yet we were bawling.

Gradually, a pattern emerged—a configuration to our sadness. Diana expressed, more poignantly than almost any other woman of our time, the melancholy solitude specific to many women's experience of marriage. The disappointments, the humiliations of her experiences with men reflected the rage my friends and I still felt, decades later, toward all those fellows in our own pasts who had jilted or deceived us, the cads who had moved on to exploit others, deaf to our anxieties and quests.

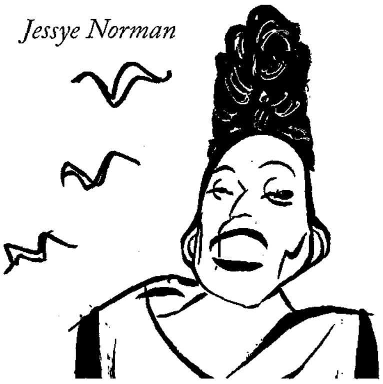
What else have we talked about when we talked about Di? About her uncanny knack for exposing privileged society's callowness—for informing us that what she'd found at the top was even worse than we'd suspected, was marked by meanness, hypocrisy, cynicism, and, above all, by a stupendous deafness to a very shy, vulnerable young woman's psychic growing pains. About the bizarreness of an institution—monarchy—that, though it has lost all true power, remains part business corporation, part public-relations firm, part pedigree kennel: Play our game or we'll fire you; keep our image squeaky-clean; be a good breeder. We know what Diana went through when she had fulfilled all those orders—the glacial manner in which she was pushed aside after she had served the royal purpose. All too many women have suffered some modest, plebeian measure of her heartbreaks. Apparently, it took her death for some of us to realize the accuracy of her message.

—Francine du Plessix Gray

FAX FROM THE VINEYARD

A race-relations summit among the gin-and-tonic set.

THE organizers of a Conversation on Race, which took place on the Friday before Labor Day on Martha's Vineyard, accounted for the fact that the island's most celebrated summertime visitor was a no-show by saying that President Clinton was in "vacation mode," and was therefore not inclined to spend an evening listening to a panel of leading black intellectuals—Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Anita Hill, Kathleen Cleaver, Cornel West, and half a dozen others—discuss his efforts to improve relations between the races.



Jessye Norman

Actually, staying away from the Old Whaling Church in Edgartown that evening was the most Presidential thing that Mr. Clinton could have done. If he had really been trying to pass as a regular vacationing Vineyard guy, he would have pulled a sports jacket on over his chinos and squeezed into a pew for three hours, just as every other thinking person on the island did. Diane Sawyer was fit for a yacht deck in pale pants and dark sweater with the sleeves pushed up. Mike Wallace was clearly off duty, the cuffs of his soft black shirt rolled back and a wine-colored sweater tossed around his shoulders. Summer residents William Styron and Steven Rattner and Harry Lasker made it their evening's diversion. Attending the Conversation was what one did on vacation, if one was a Vineyarder with aspirations to seriousness (though there were some, like Barry Diller, Vernon Jordan, and Carly Simon, who considered it sufficiently engagé to show up at the after-party, at the home of Diane Sawyer and Mike Nichols). One would-be attendee from California loitered on the church steps offering all comers a hundred dollars for a ticket, twice the face value—without much luck, since the scalping profession had thoughtlessly neglected to purchase a block for resale, and the attending Vineyarders seemed neither eager to forgo the event nor particularly in need of the extra cash. Eventually, a thin, weathered woman donated a spare ticket, declining to accept any money for it; minutes later she returned, saying she'd take fifty after all, Yankee thrift overcoming embarrassment.

Inside the Old Whaling Church, the atmosphere was charged with both summer festivity and wonkish earnestness. The megastar quotient was filled by Jessye Norman, Diane Sawyer's queenly houseguest, who greeted pals with her quirky two-handed wave, as if she were making an invisible pair of Muppets open and shut their mouths. Norman pulled off the celebrity stunt of being the most noticeable person present while graciously surrendering the stage to others. Later, at the Sawyer-Nichols bash, she would provide her own contribution to the conversation on race by singing "My Funny Valentine" with Carly Simon, but during the symposium she sat quietly in her seat, her elaborate topknot peaked a foot above her head, swirling like a portion of soft-serve ice cream, and insuring her visibility from all corners of the church.

On the rostrum, the panelists took five minutes each to pronounce their reactions to the President's year-long Initiative on Race. The Columbia Law professor Patricia Williams commanded the most attention, with a story of being granted a mortgage. When her bankers realized that she was black, the terms of her loan suddenly became less favorable. This was not, the bank argued, direct discrimination but due to demographic data suggesting that black ownership would reduce property values in the neighborhood. When Williams threatened to sue, she received the original loan. "In my brand-new house," she said, "I hovered behind my brand-new kitchen curtains, wondering whether the very appearance of myself would endanger my collateral still further." Williams's tale of real estate, a conversation in which all those present looked entirely qualified to participate, earned her an ovation of Normanesque proportions. It's possible that the applause might have been less rapturous if Williams had revealed that the house in question was, in fact, her Vineyard home. —Rebecca Mead

THE CULTURE INDUSTRY

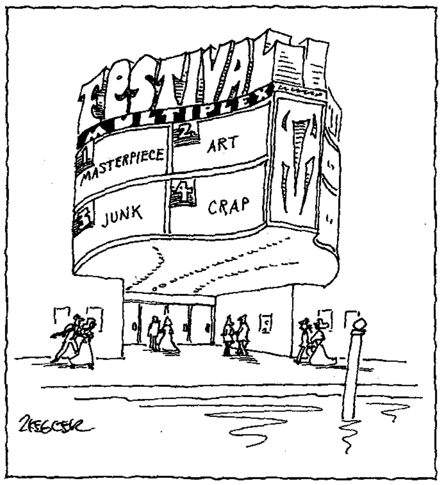
On the film-festival circuit, Venice is the new anti-Cannes.

BY KURT ANDERSEN

If you invite producers, film-distribution apparatchiks, and journalists to a resort to watch unreleased movies, assert grand opinions, and eat expense-account meals among the professionally good-looking, they tend to show up. There are, however, some more interesting reasons for the mad proliferation of film festivals.

Cannes is the most celebrated festival, but there's a pecking order. Telluride is the Western Hemisphere's definitively hip film festival, having overtaken Sundance, which is deemed to have grown too commercial, too slick, too frenzied—too Cannes-like. Outside America, the Venice Film Festival, which gives its prizes Saturday night, is the stylish anti-Cannes. In the past few years, as Cannes has become more than ever a hubba-hubba philistine circus (last spring's memorable photo op was a giant, inflated Howard Stern), Venice has been reinvented to glide right into the cool new transatlantic movie-business slipstream. The rise of the American independents—that is, the commercial success of some excellent low-budget films, particularly "Pulp Fiction," because it starred real movie stars—pumped up the glamour quotients of certain arty movies. For the first time since the late sixties, when films like "Easy Rider" and "Midnight Cowboy" supplanted European cinema in the American upper-middle-brow imagination, real quirkiness successfully crossbred with Hollywood. In the right postmodern proportions, consequence and glitz can mix nicely: the Venice festival thus draws plenty of stars (Harrison Ford, Emma Thompson, Elisabeth Shue, Sylvester Stallone, and Nicole Kidman this year), but serious, low-budget films still predominate. And the European venue gives the whole show a classical resonance. When Harmony Korine—the twenty-three-year-old director, who is in Venice with "Gummo," his cinéma-vérité chronicle of two white-trash Ohio teen-agers—told me that he models himself on "Jean-Luc," he meant Godard, not the captain of the Starship Enterprise.

"On the spectrum of the unholy alliance between art and commerce," says Liz Manne, who runs marketing for Fine Line Features, Time Warner's Miramax-manqué boutique, "the others have moved toward commerce. Venice is still more like the old days. Films not so easily digestible can get killed at Cannes or Sundance. Especially with a controversial film like 'Gummo,' even if it's a mess you have official bodies that have said, 'This is art.'" In other words, Cannes is the Hamptons, Venice is Martha's Vineyard—the latter are what the former were back in the good old days. As with alternative everything, the informing sensibility at Venice desires commercial success—it just doesn't want to appear to want it too shamelessly. Before the festival's opening ceremony, the director Paul Schrader teasingly asked his new movie's co-star, Willem Dafoe, if his suit was Prada, in whose ads Dafoe appears. "Nah," Dafoe said, smiling at the implied whorishness. "That's why I *can't* wear Prada."



Unlike the people involved with "Air Force One" and "Cop Land," who are in Venice simply to incite European press coverage, Schrader has no distribution deal for "Affliction," his good, bleak film about a man breaking down. "This is a big pair of dice to roll, because if you get a negative buzz it's straight to video," Schrader told me. "That's scary. When you have a serious film, what the distributor wants to know is, 'Am I gonna get support from the critical community?'"

People seemed to like "Affliction" and "Niagara, Niagara," a neo-hippie road picture about a girl with Tourette's syndrome. Jane Campion, the head of the Venice jury, told me she liked Woody Allen's "Deconstructing Harry," although for the overwhelmingly Italian audience phrases such as "world-class meshuggana cunt" probably lost something in translation. Adultery by well-to-do bohemian men in midlife crises ("Deconstructing Harry," Mike Figgis's "One Night Stand," "Metroland") was the de-facto festival theme.

There was more buzz about Count Volpi than about any film. Giovanni Volpi, a smart, down-to-earth man who seems to know everyone, and whose late father founded the festival, in 1932, supplies the trophies and hosts an A-list lunch at his villa on the Giudecca. When Umberto Vattani, the secretary-general of the Italian foreign ministry, toasted Volpi at the lunch as "the last baroque prince in Europe," the guests chuckled happily, among them the daughter of the last Italian king; Jack Valenti; Charlotte Rampling; and the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Anan.

The festival, like Italy, was inefficiently organized. At the opening ceremony, the m.c. asked Dafoe if he was German or English. An announcer introduced the co-star of "Deconstructing Harry" as "Kirstie Allen," and the event came to a halt for twenty minutes so that technicians could remove TV lights. Screening queues were mob scenes. No one seemed to mind terribly—it's Venice!—except Count Volpi, whose righteous fight with the festival regime was itself an Italian political microcosm. "There's no professionalism. They think the mess is fine. They don't have a clue," he said. "Venice is way, way behind what it could be. This could be so far ahead of Cannes." He shook his head, recalling the anti-Hollywood remarks of the festival's new curator. The count took a drag on his cigarette, then went to chat with Harrison Ford. Later, when someone asked Ford if he would return next year for a U.N.-focussed adjunct to the film festival, he smiled, glanced around the sunny, perfect villa grounds, and said, "I have no intention of *leaving*." ♦

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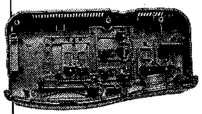

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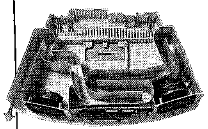

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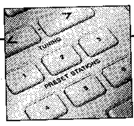

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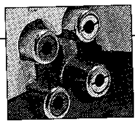

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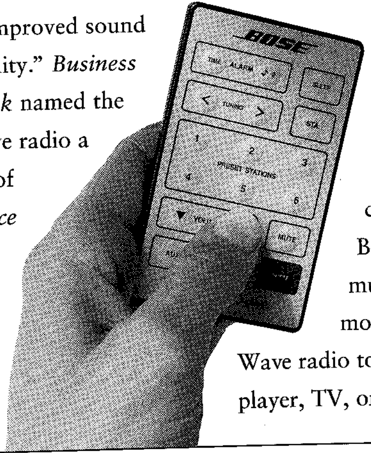

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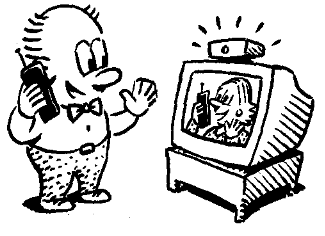

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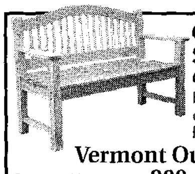

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ANNALS OF COMMUNICATIONS

THE EMMY FACTORY

Why does everyone seem to win television's most recognized award?

BY KEN AULETTA

JOHN CANNON affects a grave, almost funereal mien, greeting a visitor to his dimly lit offices with a solemn handshake. Although it is a warm July day, his windows are shut and the air-conditioning is off. When he sits, he doesn't unbutton his double-breasted blue pin-striped jacket; when he speaks, he barely gestures. He is surrounded by artifacts—several Emmy trophies, a framed citation from the mayor of Boston, photographs, books of biography and American history. A man in his late seventies, he seems a figure from another era; an out-of-fashion powder-blue silk handkerchief protrudes from his breast pocket, neither clashing with nor quite complementing a striped blue shirt and a light-blue tie.

In a culture that esteems prizes—and hands them out to almost every profession on almost any occasion—Cannon more than plays his part. For the past twenty years, he has served as the president of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, which bestows the Emmy award. "The Emmy is the single most famous award in TV," Cannon declares. "The Oscar and the Emmy are the two most widely recognized statuettes in the world." And Cannon's literature proclaims that, with twelve thousand members, the academy is "the single largest television-industry professional organization in the world."

However, Cannon's National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences should not to be confused with the West Coast's Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. The two groups officially split in 1976, after Cannon bested a Los Angeles-based rival for the presidency of the academy, but the two coasts have been taking different paths almost since 1946, when the academy was founded, in California. On the West Coast, Emmys are awarded on prime-time television and given to entertainment figures. On the East Coast, the award itself—a fifteen-inch statue of a winged woman reaching up and grasping an electron—is often better known than its recipients. On September 10th, at the eighteenth annual black-tie News and Documentary Awards presentation, at the Marriott Marquis Hotel, Cannon will preside over one of many such ceremonies that he conducts each year. Officially, Cannon's organization celebrates television's achievements, and its aim is to set standards for the industry. The fact is that Cannon is running a factory.

Each year, his organization manufactures Emmys for much more than news and documentaries. The award ceremonies tend to be non-stop. In April, Cannon is the host of a black-tie dinner for up to eight hundred people and awards Emmys for Sports. In May, the Daytime Emmys are televised from Radio City Music Hall. In August, Community Service Programs and Projects are celebrated. September is reserved for News and Documentary; October brings Scientific and Technical Achievement; and in November it's the International Broadcasters. In addition, there are Emmy ceremonies to present Special Recognition Awards and Trustees Awards—not to mention the seventeen chapters of Cannon's organization which bestow their own awards on local stations. In all, in 1996 the Academy handed out one thousand one hundred and forty-seven Emmys.

Some recipients lose count of the number they've won. When I asked the CBS anchorman, Dan Rather, how many he possessed, he replied, "I honestly don't know." He has won twenty-four.

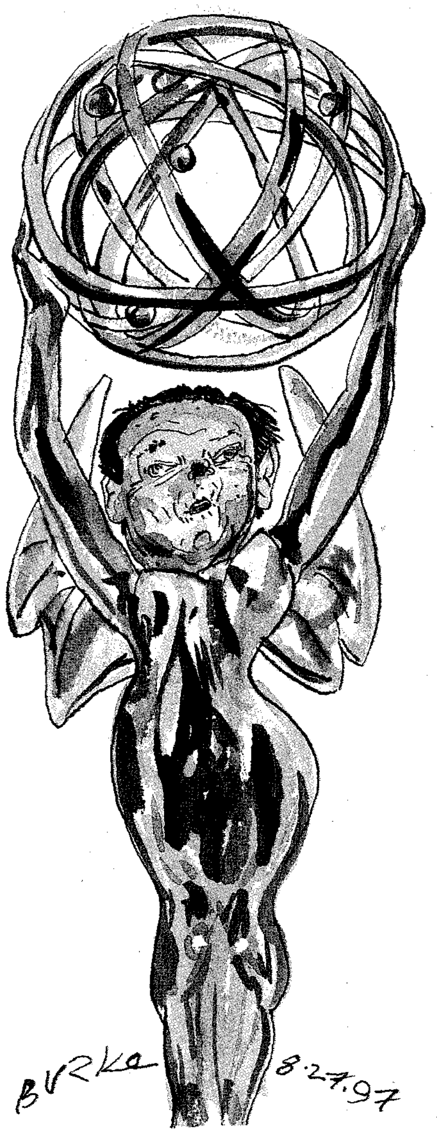
CANNON'S New York-based academy, which is registered as a nonprofit 501(c)6 organization, collected, according to its I.R.S. filing, nearly five million dollars in its last fiscal year. The money comes from fees paid by broadcast and cable companies for each nomination submitted; from ticket sales to the Emmy ceremonies; from the sale of television rights to some of the Emmy ceremonies; and from the sale of Emmy trophies when the winners are part of a team. Aware of this, Richard Kaplan, the former ABC and CBS producer, who was appointed president of CNN last month, was startled to learn that it is a nonprofit organization.

The academy uses its money to employ a staff of eighteen; to hire the accounting firms of Lutz & Carr and Deloitte & Touche to make sure that no Emmy ballot boxes are stuffed; to conduct seminars; to publish a quarterly newsletter and a magazine; to grant a smattering of college scholarships and to provide health benefits for members; and to produce trophies and invitations to the dinners. Another portion takes care of Cannon's salary (according to the last federal filing, his compensation was two hundred and fourteen thousand dollars), and another slice supports Cannon's entertainment expenses (twenty-nine thousand dollars). "The Emmy is very democratic," Cannon said. Anyone who pays can be nominated, and these entries go directly to the jurors. The only function his staff performs, Cannon went on, is "to see that everything is placed in the correct category." When that is done, the democratic process that Cannon extolls is fully engaged.

"I have never met anybody in television who does not have an Emmy, and I find that strange," Charles R. Eisendrath, the director of the University of Michigan's Journalism Fellows Program, said. In 1996, two hundred and eighty-four individuals received News and Documentary Emmys. Richard Kaplan is tied with Rather, Ted Koppel, and Bill Moyers for second place in the News Emmy-collection derby. (Roone Arledge is first, with thirty.) Yet he calls them "a fraud in that the categories are stupid." He said, "It's a scam because it costs a fortune to enter. We used to write a five-thousand-to-six-thousand-dollar check for 'ABC World News Tonight' just to enter."

PHILIP BURKE

This year's News and Documentary Emmys will include awards for general coverage of a single breaking news story on a program, as well as for investigative journalism, but there are separate awards in these categories for "segments" of a program. The categories can be confusing. The press release announcing the nominations exhausts twenty-eight pages. Paul Friedman, the executive producer of "ABC World News Tonight," observes, "They give out too many of them and thus devalue them."



TV newspeople—as they freely confess—yearn to collect awards.

Walter Cronkite, who was a president of the academy from 1959 to 1960, told Thomas O'Neil in an interview for his generally adulatory book "The Emmys" that the organization had moved away from its original inspiration, which was the French Academy of wise men and women "who sat in judgment of their peers." Excellence versus egalitarianism. "I spoke up vociferously for this and I was shouted down by the huge majority—the *huge* majority," Cronkite recalled, saying that they were "principally motivated with the idea of giving awards each year and putting on a good show." The former CBS News president Fred Friendly, joined by third-ranked ABC News, boycotted the awards in the mid-sixties, complaining that they were "unprofessional" because they were too abundant.

Such disdain is usually only whispered, since TV newspeople—as they freely confess—yearn to collect more awards. Television is a medium that measures success by ratings (print journalists can only guess at their readership), and awards therefore take on a special importance as a credential. The print press, which also is enormously fond of giving itself awards in all sorts of categories, has been quick to go along. The recent CNN press release announcing Richard Kaplan's appointment as president boasted, "He is the winner of 34 Emmy Awards." News accounts usually cited this figure (the correct number is twenty-four) in their opening paragraph.

While many people associated with television dismiss the Emmy process, between seven hundred and eight hundred newspeople and executives will pay three thousand dollars a table to wear black tie and squirm and applaud as Cannon presents Emmys for News and Documentary and lathers them with praise. Those in attendance know that in this contest there are few losers. "If you're a network and you have six nominations, you know you'll win three," a senior producer who has won numerous Emmys and hopes to snare at least one more this week told me. The producer said that they split the awards. "Why? This is a business. The Emmys want all the networks to be happy." Whether this charge is justified or not, Tom Brokaw, the NBC anchor, says that, unlike the more esteemed duPont television-and-radio awards, for example, where the ceremony is free and

STOCK EXCHANGE

open, the Emmy ceremonies give you the "feeling you're buying your way in and out of the room."

CANNON has been an actor and a broadcaster, working for radio station WBBM, in Chicago. He also conducted interviews, mostly of celebrities, for NBC's radio program "Monitor." In the early seventies, Cannon did voice-overs for Department of State footage of head-of-state visits.

The Emmy process that Cannon has presided over for two decades works this way: Each spring, broadcast or cable networks or individuals pay fees ranging from a hundred to three hundred dollars to nominate themselves for an Emmy; this year, there were nearly thirteen hundred entries in thirty-two categories. It is not unusual for awards to charge a nominating fee, but the Emmy toll does get pricey. (The duPont and the Peabody awards charge not more than a hundred and a hundred and fifty, respectively. Print's most luminous prize—the Pulitzer—charges fifty dollars per book or newspaper or music applicant; the Pulitzer for drama has no application fee.) The NBC News president, Andrew Lack, reports that his division budgets about twenty-five thousand dollars just to pay for Emmy nominations, yet he concedes, "I don't have great regard for the fairness of whether these awards represent the best in our industry."

One weekend in late May or in June, two hundred or so judges are invited to various rooms at a hotel, and there, on VCRs, they watch each nominee in a single category. If any of the six to twenty peer judges cannot make it that weekend, they go to watch in the academy's offices, on West Fifty-seventh Street. "There is no discussion" among the judges, explains Cannon. Each simply assigns an entry a grade from one to five and the grades are collected by the accounting firm. The firms add up the scores and eliminate those which score below a certain total. The standard the judges use, Cannon says, is a "standard of excellence."

A different description is provided by one of the anonymous jurors—a producer who has been an Emmy judge three times. The day begins with "a fancy breakfast," says this producer, and breakfast is followed by an assignment to a category—in this case, to "general coverage of a single breaking news story." The producer explains, "It was not what I thought of as breaking news. It was little feature stories. You don't watch the whole show. If it's a one-hour show, you watch maybe five minutes." A segment from the "Today" show was tossed in with an hourlong documentary from CNN. This judge was puzzled that there were so many nominees from NBC and none from ABC. Instead of "excellence," the producer walked away thinking another criterion was employed: "You have the feeling that something is going on that has nothing to do with merit but has to do with submission fees." Unlike most award competitions, the judges do not debate the merits of each entry, or even speak to each other; they just leave their scorecards with the accountants.

Cannon says the judges are peers, but he won't reveal who they are, and that especially irritates critics of the awards. Tom Brokaw, who has won five Emmys, said, "I'm troubled by the procedures—by not knowing who the judges are, by the commercial aspects of it. This man makes his living at this." The ABC anchor Peter Jennings, who has won ten, said it "bothers" him that the Emmy judges are anonymous, and for that reason he doesn't rate the Emmy as highly as he does the duPont or the Peabody. Cannon explains that the judges are anonymous in order to avoid lobbying or retribution. "Once an individual submits to being a judge, we feel we must defend him," he said. "We must protect his reputation." When I asked Cannon how or why he must protect a reputation that is anonymous, he said only, "There is a circular argument there. We don't think of it that way." (Members of both academies vote to nominate programs for the entertainment awards. On the West Coast, winners are then chosen by a panel of peers—also anonymous—who apply to be on it.)

Another source of confusion is the nominations themselves. In the category "outstanding general coverage of a single breaking news story (programs)," for example, ABC's "Nightline" was nominated for its coverage of the crash of TWA Flight 800. It competed against another "Nightline," describing the arrest of the Unabomber suspect, and against a CBS "48 Hours" on the Citadel. An inexplicable fourth, and final, nominee in this category was an A&E "Biography" of the late George Burns.

Cannon has defenders. Tom Brokaw told me that he respects the democratic benefits of the award: "It still has meaning to people. I fully understand the value of recognition. At the same time, especially as a journalist, you have to look hard at the real value of the recognition." And CBS's Rather said, "I don't consider the Emmys a joke. I consider them an honor. They're a plus for the craft. I'm always impressed that younger people in the business get dressed up for the Emmys, and when they win one they glow."

In the end, the Emmys, not unlike some other professional awards, are beset by a fundamental contradiction: the academy is both judge and booster. "We do all we can to make this a better industry," Cannon said, and a moment later he observed, "We have great access to the upper echelons of the industry." But in carrying out a program that is more noted for its generosity than for its rigor, Cannon often seems to fill the role of nurse rather than that of doctor. Even supporters such as Dan Rather say that the Emmys give too many awards. Now and then, Rather suggested, the academy should announce, " 'There's nothing in this category that deserves an award.' Doing that would increase the value of the award." For Richard Kaplan's wife, such an announcement would certainly increase the value of the award. "At this point, my wife won't let me bring any more Emmys in the house," Kaplan said. ♦

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[*From the Washington Post*]

The column produced more flames than an oil field in Abu Dhabi. "The hysterical tone of the column is astounding," wrote cyberpundit Brock N. Meeks. "This sort of journalistic tripe is poison and yet, at the same time, grist for the mill among the twisted jackals who make up Congress and who, it seems, have no qualms about using the Internet as a personal whipping post whenever it suits their fancy."

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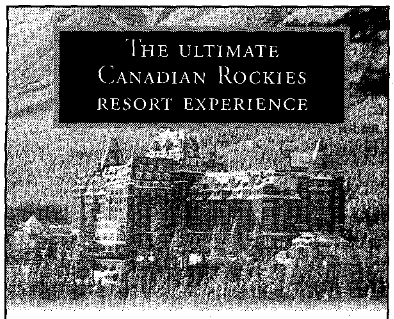

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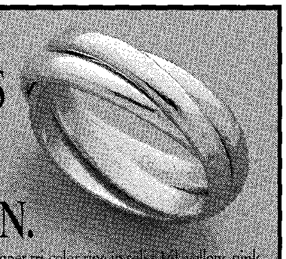

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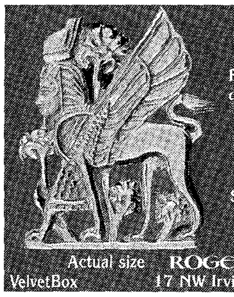

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ANNALS OF LAW

PRIVACY MATTERS

Two and a half years ago, the author, one of Britain's leading civil-rights barristers, faced a curious prospect: cross-examining the Princess of Wales.

BY GEOFFREY ROBERTSON

On St. Valentine's Day, 1995, I was scheduled to meet the Princess of Wales in court. I had been retained to represent the manager of L.A. Fitness, a health club in southwest London. Diana had been a member of the gym and had used it regularly for several years, until she discovered that the manager, Bryce Taylor, had installed a camera in the ceiling and had secretly been photographing her as she exercised on the leg press. She saw the photographs only when the pictures, a "world exclusive," were published on the front page of a British tabloid under the headline "DI SPY SENSATION"—"The most amazing pictures you'll ever see: PAGES 2 & 3, 12 & 13 and CENTRE PAGES." The photographs were certainly striking, not least because they were unposed: they showed a woman, calm and confident, pitted against a fitness machine. But the sight of her private self in a tabloid newspaper caused such a deep, humiliating sense of violation that she became determined to go to court to ask it to do something that had no precedent in Britain: to protect privacy. In bringing this action, she was trying to shape a law that would shelter her from the very world of photographers and journalists and tabloid-newspaper editors which had become an essential feature of her life.

The case, however, had its complications. The gym, for instance, wasn't the most obvious place for a daily workout by the Princess of Wales. It was, in fact, according to a London listings magazine, the most public gym in London. It had a giant room, crisscrossed by catwalks, where everyone could see everyone else. The leg-press machine that Diana used was in front of a vast glass wall looking onto a public street: it was like working out in a shopwindow. It often took nearly an hour to drive there from Kensington Palace. If Diana had really wanted privacy, some commentators wondered, then why did she go to such trouble to frequent this very public place? Why didn't she work out at Buckingham Palace? (It, too, had a leg-press machine, apparently for footmen who wanted to keep fit.) What's more, it was learned that Diana was exercising at L.A. Fitness by invitation: her membership cost her nothing.

But did these complications matter? Had Diana been photographed through the glass from the public street, she probably would not have complained. The point was that she was snapped by a camera hidden in the ceiling. Wasn't that enough for her to sue?

For its part, the newspaper tried to justify the publication of the pictures on the ground that they were in the "public interest." Besides, the pictures were flattering, and did they not reveal the inadequacies of her police protection? It is easy today to forget just how widely Diana was regarded as the author of her own misfortunes. The chairman of Britain's Press Complaints Commission, in dealing with the furor arising out of the newspaper serialization of her "unauthorized" biography by Andrew Morton, had virtually accused her of invading her own privacy with "intrusions contrived" by her and her entourage. Conduct that is now diagnosed as symptoms of a stress disorder was seen then as Diana's promoting her own version of a self-indulgent culture of victimization and complaint, while her visits to AIDS clinics and hospitals were criticized as being quests for photo opportunities. The most cynical said that she had taken a leaf out of the Benetton advertising book, using the dying as visual props to make herself look good in contrast. In such an environment, her sudden assertion that she had a right to her own privacy in order to restrain the publication of surreptitiously taken photographs was seen to be idle: she was asking for it. Even if she had not requested this particular order, it lay ill in her mouth to complain.

But complain she did, courageously, I think, and brought the case so close to trial that more than seven hundred journalists applied for seventy-five seats in the

Royal Courts of Justice. Their coverage would have little to do with the rights and wrongs of the case: they would be there to hear the evidence that, published the following morning, would sell their newspapers. By this time, some eighteen months after the photographs were taken, Diana was once again back in favor: a victory over the gym manager would have been a matter for ostensible rejoicing, modified only by the concerns of corporate news organizations over any privacy precedent the judge might set. The defense had a brief taste of what the plaintiff had endured: lawyers' mobile-telephone conversations with witnesses were intercepted and sold to newspapers, and strange stories about lawyers began to appear. (I was described in the *Times* as left-wing, anti-establishment, and Australian, presumably in ascending order of horror.) My elderly parents were "doorstepped" late at night by reporters, twelve thousand miles from London, and asked to give advice to Diana. "I would settle out of court," said my father, always eager to help.

Diana had tried to shape a law that would shelter her from the photographers and journalists who had become essential features of her life.

GLADYS PERINT PALMER

I have related these facts about the case as a setting in which to explain what has to be a subjective attempt to square the circle—more accurately, to locate points on a penumbra—spanning the values of press freedom and privacy. The "law" in such equations has never been precise, nor is it ever likely to be: in every country press freedom boils down to a bargain, a three-way deal between state power and popular instinct and the media's muscle. Everywhere, the press is only relatively free. In some countries the definition may be nothing more than the one offered by Tom Stoppard's African dictator in "Night and Day": "We have a relatively free press, by which I mean a press run by my relatives." But even in the West—the so-called democratic West—a free press is complicated.

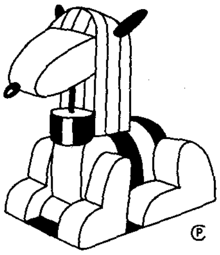
The free press in Britain, for instance, is distinguished by some of the more oppressive libel laws in the world, laws that regularly bury important reportage about crime and malpractice before it ever appears. For years, no journalist could properly write about Robert Maxwell's criminal practices: each successive effort was stopped in the courts. And yet there is no law that protects personal privacy: in Britain kiss-and-tell stories by bedroom sneaks are staple reading. In contrast, across the Channel, France has stringent protection for privacy. The French did not learn of President Mitterrand's illegitimate daughter until she was nineteen (and then only with Mitterrand's implicit consent), and the photographer with a telephoto lens who took the liberty of photographing the sucking of the Duchess of York's toes in August, 1992, his agency, and the French magazine that printed the pictures were fined close to a hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

The deal that's struck for a country's press invariably expresses its national preferences and values. In America, for instance, the deal is often brokered by the courts. It was the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit that defined "paparazzo" as "a kind of annoying insect, perhaps roughly equivalent to the English 'gadfly,' " when, in 1973, it refereed the clash between Jacqueline Onassis and the gadfly in question, the photographer Ronald Galella. Galella had exceeded the reasonable boundaries for news-gathering by intentionally assaulting Mrs. Onassis and invading her son's school, endangering their safety in car chases, and disrupting her children's riding and water-skiing lessons. The result was an exceptional compromise between free speech and privacy: Galella was prohibited from approaching closer than twenty-five feet to Mrs. Onassis and thirty feet to her children, or blocking their movements, or doing anything that might jeopardize their safety or cause them genuine alarm. Otherwise, his taking and selling pictures was not to be restrained. This surely is the very least that public figures should expect, anywhere in the world.

The laws governing the British press also reflect the country's values and preferences. This, after all, is a society that's known for its prurience and prudishness. The newspapers that are the most despised for invading private lives are also the most popular: they reflect rather than create the nation's character. This is a society in which tens of thousands of people report their neighbors for not paying their annual television-license fee; in which the security services have not been brought under democratic control; in which telephone tapping and other forms of covert surveillance are permitted by the police without their first having to apply to a court; and in which eavesdropping is a popular pastime. Today's true Brit is perhaps Cyril Reenan, the retired bank manager whose hobby was snooping on other people's conversations with the assistance of a fifteen-hundred-dollar radio scanner linked to an antenna in his garden. When he intercepted Diana's "Squidgygate" conversation with an old boyfriend, James Gilbey, he insisted he did not want to hurt the Royal Family; that, evidently, is why he delivered the tapes to the *Sun* for safekeeping.

Britain exported its laws to its colonies (where they remain the bedrock of more than fifty Commonwealth countries), but not its prurience. Canada and Australia and New Zealand have made different—and, on the whole, more sensible—deals for their free press. They have enacted some privacy laws or established privacy commissions, and have remained largely uninterested in the sex lives of their leaders.

All deals for the press are struck between press and politicians and public. But the laws that describe these deals are everywhere as supple as plasticine, open to negotiation and bluff. And, when the stakes are high, they get broken, like all laws: after all, the photographer who took a picture of a duchess canoodling with a playboy may have been fined a hundred and fifty thousand dollars, but the pictures made millions.



PRACTICE at the bar in Britain involves no moral quandary: our ethics are those of the cab rank on which we ply for trade. I might have preferred to act for the Princess, but I was not in the position to choose or complain. I was, ironically, the author of a legal textbook that had analyzed and deplored the absence of any privacy law in Britain, pointing out the hollowness of the boast that "an Englishman's home is his castle" at a time when photographers have no legal trouble getting across the drawbridge and proceeding to the bedchambers. But most of my book, like most of my practice, was concerned with press freedom, a freedom that is regularly seen to be in conflict with anyone's need for privacy.

A number of times, I've had to ask myself a question that all editors who affect concern for human rights must ponder before paying the six-figure sums routinely shelled out for pictures of celebrities in some sort of flagrante. Why is privacy a value that calls for protection under every human-rights treaty ever devised? There is, I'm convinced, a psychological need to preserve an intrusion-free zone of personality and family, and there is always anguish and stress when that zone is violated. Hence the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights speaks of a "right" to respect private and family life, home and correspondence. But at the same time this declaration also speaks of the "right" of freedom of expression.

In real life, these two rights are rarely seen to coexist. Influenced, perhaps unduly, by the media's self-interest, we have become much more concerned about violations of free speech than about those of privacy. Free speech is regularly defended by human-rights organizations (some formed solely for this purpose), while violations of privacy are rarely condemned. We are inclined to perceive loss of privacy merely as a quid pro quo for being rich and famous, forgetting (as Orwell never did) that this very loss was fundamental to all our objections to Communism. And the concern is not merely for princes or film stars or potentates: instant international exposure is liable to alight upon anyone caught up in a major disaster or in an unperfected moment of heroism or horror. The life of Richard Jewell had amounted to little until the bombing at the Olympic Games in Atlanta: for three days he was its hero and for the next three months its villain, his innocent life stripped to its bones by media omnivorousness as television cameras crowded outside his house morning after morning. The same protection should be offered to all, whether implemented by law or by our better nature. Isn't there a point at which the torture of an individual has to stop, even if the victim did beg for it?

Professors of law and journalism solemnly locate that point by distinguishing between what is in the public interest and what is of interest to the public. But to what purpose? That which interests the public is ipso facto in the public interest, because this determines what makes the news.

It is possible that we have reached a new point, in the aftermath of the crash photos that few papers are prepared to print; it is also possible that the result will be a new deal. Hitherto, considerations of decency and a respect for privacy have been treated with contempt, especially when Diana was involved. When the *Sun* printed surreptitiously photographed pictures of Diana pregnant on a Caribbean beach, the newspaper was immediately condemned by Britain's Press Complaints Commission—a move that the paper then used as an excuse to republish the photographs under the banner headline "THIS IS WHAT THE ROW'S ALL ABOUT FOLKS!" This was its jeering reaction to an organization that purported to supervise "press ethics" and proved only that, for the tabloids at least, such a concept is oxymoronic. Today, however, there seems to be a new awareness of two limits: dimly, one imposed by conscience, and, more keenly, a fear that readers content to be treated as voyeurs will revolt if regarded as ghouls.

I believe we need a privacy convention as much as we need a convention against torture and genocide. States need an instrument that will allow them to protect basic human decencies, just as they need one for guaranteeing the freedom of expression. Both values—privacy and free expression—are universal and can be complementary. The growing number of international public figures, whether crowned or elected or created by happenstance, might then enjoy the reputations they deserve: reputations that must withstand the scrutiny of all areas of their lives *except* for those that are behind a door marked "Do Not Disturb." What these areas turn out to be will vary with national idiosyncrasies, but they should generally deny entry to the cradle, the school, and the bedroom, to the hospital and the grave.

SUCH a convention would not, however, be a memorial to the Princess of Wales. A few days before her case was to be tried, there was a settlement.

Could one have argued—had the trial gone forward—that the gymnasium has been a public arena since its beginnings in ancient Greece? I doubt it. Would she have won? I don't know. But, win or lose, the case would have edged the law forward beyond Britain's most recent paradigm case, where paparazzi invaded the hospital room of a television star coming around after a brain operation and were permitted to publish the results. Win or lose, she would have made legal history. But at the last moment lawyers handling negotiations telephoned me to announce an agreement. The terms were confidential. The paper that had paid for and published the pictures said that it withdrew from the case to save the Princess the further embarrassment of going through a trial. Other newspapers alleged that the gym manager had been handsomely rewarded, which they found ironic, as he was the one being sued. In seeking to protect her own privacy, perhaps the Princess illustrated the crowning paradox of any such effort: those who demand privacy risk not only reliving their original distress but having their privacy violated all over again.

Diana was killed fleeing the flashbulbs she often positioned herself to attract. She may achieve in death what she could not achieve in court: she may provide some understanding of the universal need for a right to be let alone. If her death produces the law she failed to create in life, she will have the last laugh; or, as the papers would have put it, the last infectious giggle. ♦

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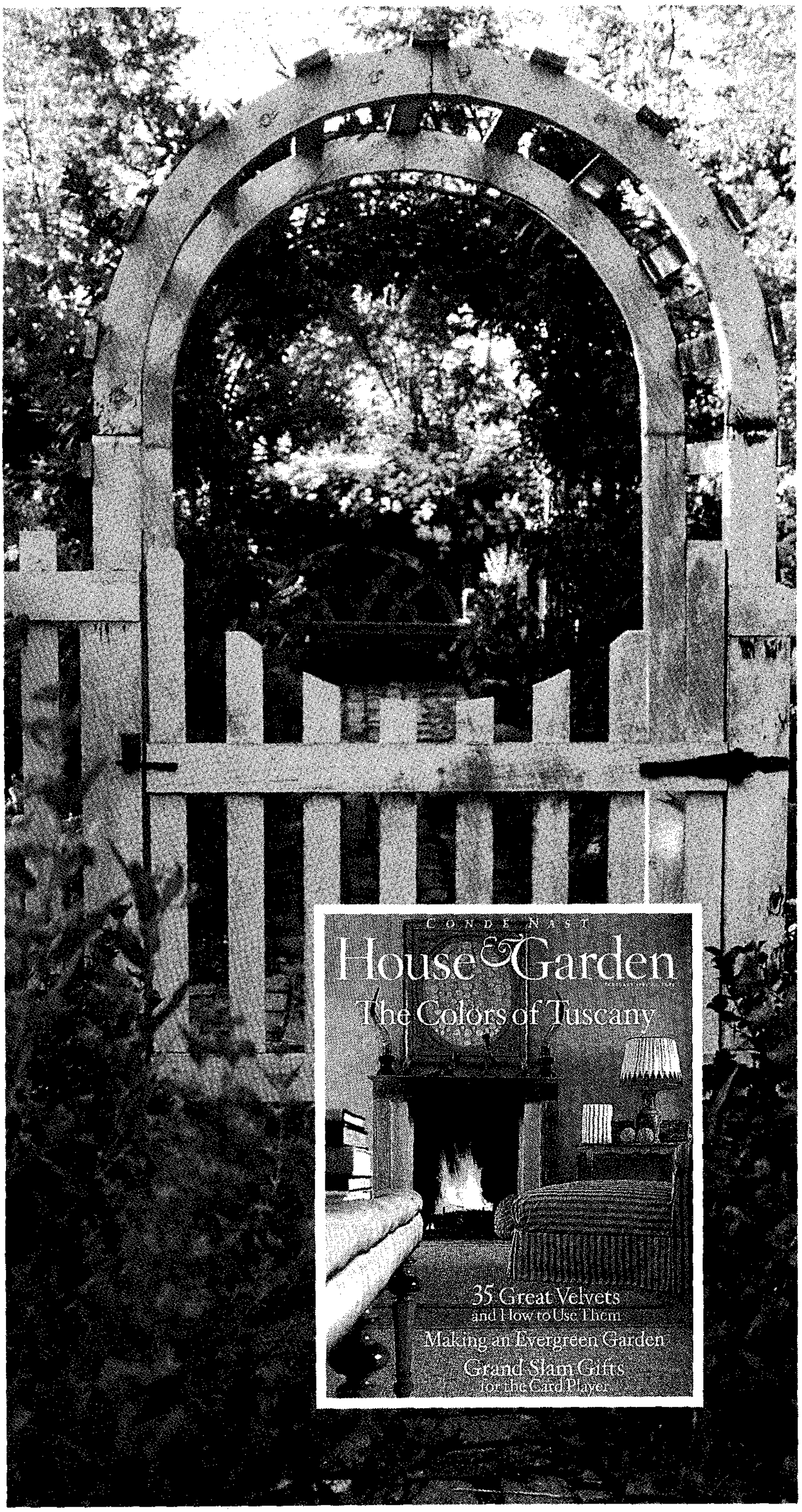

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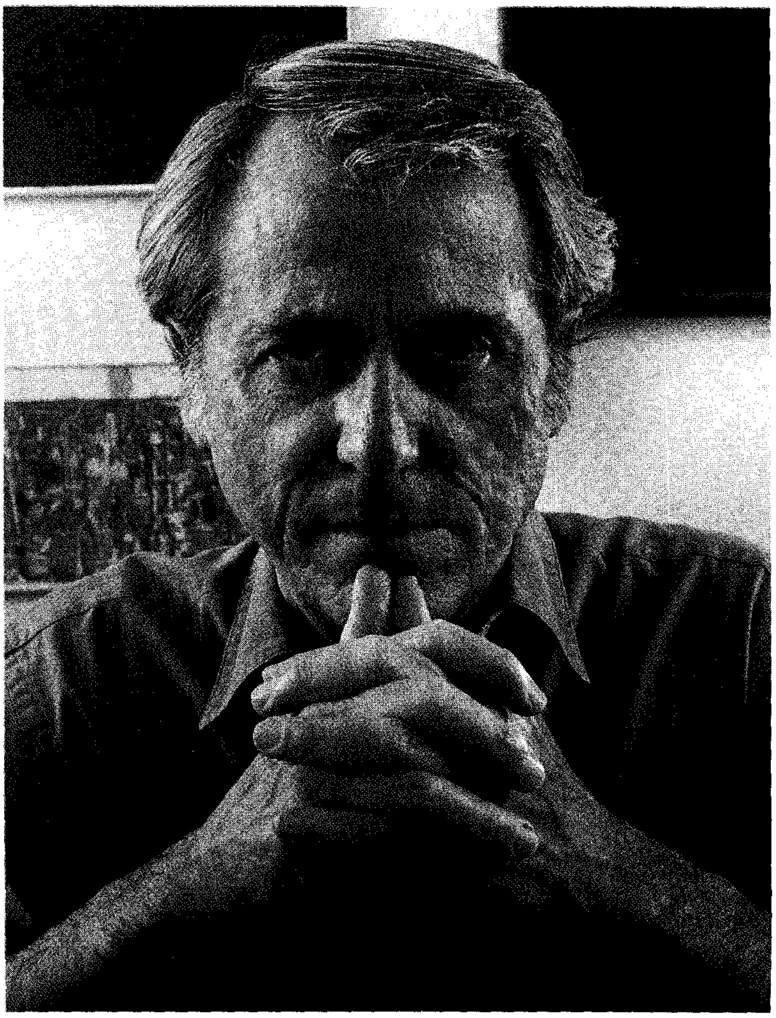
PROFILE

EXILE ON MAIN STREET

Don DeLillo's undisclosed underworld.

BY DAVID REMNICK

IN the spring of 1988, the editors of the New York *Post* sent a pair of photographers to New Hampshire with instructions to find J. D. Salinger and take his picture. If the phrase "take his picture" had any sense of violence or, at least, violation left in it at all, if it still retained the undertone of certain peoples who are convinced that a photographer threatens them with the theft of their souls, then it applied here. There is no mystery why the *Post* pursued its prey. For whatever reasons (and one presumes they are not happy reasons), Salinger stopped publishing long ago—his last story, "Hapworth 16, 1924," appeared in *The New Yorker* in 1965—and he has lived a reclusive life ever since. His withdrawal became for journalists a story demanding resolution, intervention, and exposure. Inevitably, the *Post* got its man. The journalists took Salinger's picture. ("We're sorry. But too bad. He's a public figure.") The paper ran a photograph on the front page of a gaunt, sixty-nine-year-old man recoiling, as if anticipating catastrophe. In that instant, the look in Salinger's eyes was one of such terror that it is a wonder he survived it. "CATCHER CAUGHT" the headline screamed in triumph.



Don DeLillo, photographed by Arnold Newman. "Being called a 'bad citizen' is a compliment to a novelist," he says.

On the day Salinger's picture appeared in the *Post*, another novelist of stature, Don DeLillo, began thinking about the inescapable and mystical power of the image in the media age, and, closer to home, about his own half-hearted attempts to keep his distance from the mass-media machinery. From the start, he had been shy of exposure outside the exposure of the work itself. When he published his first novel, "Americana," in 1971, he had asked that the author's note on the jacket read, simply, "Don DeLillo lives and works in New York City." No offense intended, but he preferred to keep it that way.

After living in the Bronx and Manhattan for many years, DeLillo and his wife, Barbara Bennett, eventually settled a half hour's train ride north of the city, in Westchester County. They live in a green, quiet place lousy with lawyers, doctors, editors, and bankers. They both work at home: DeLillo as a novelist in his upstairs study, Bennett as a landscape designer. (She used to be an executive at Citibank.) DeLillo does not teach, he rarely gives readings, and he keeps interviews to a minimum. When friends would ask his credo, DeLillo would say he lived by the words of Stephen Dedalus: "Silence, exile, cunning—and so on."

But what DeLillo learned from the picture in the *Post*, and what he has very likely learned through his friendship with Thomas Pynchon, is that the price of complete withdrawal is even greater than the price of media whoredom. Not long after seeing the picture of Salinger, DeLillo began writing "Mao II," a book with a novelist named Bill Gray at its center. At one point, Gray says, "When a writer doesn't show his face, he becomes a local symptom of God's famous reluctance to appear. . . . People may be intrigued by this figure but they also resent him and mock him and want to dirty him up and watch his face distort in shock and fear when the concealed photographer leaps out of the trees."

THERE was a time when people who aspired to be a part of something called "the American reading public" felt vaguely obliged to buy, and even read, the fiction of the moment. One felt guilty about missing "A Perfect Day for Bananafish," "The Adventures of Augie March," or "The Group." There is now more anxiety, probably, about missing "Pulp Fiction" a month after its release than about never reading the latest Saul Bellow novel. Occasionally, a serious novel carries with it a sense of popular urgent appeal and elbows its way past the bilge and onto the best-seller list. The most recent example is Pynchon's "Mason & Dixon"—a phenomenon that may have as much to do with the author's long silence and the exquisite packaging of the book as with the novel itself. Twenty-five years ago, a novel like Philip Roth's "American Pastoral" would have been thought unmissable. No more.

It will be interesting to see what happens with DeLillo's new novel, "Underworld," to be published next month. DeLillo is sixty, and this, his eleventh book, is his longest, most ambitious, and most complicated novel—and his best. The length is in excess of eight hundred pages; the ambition is to portray the American psyche during its Cold War ascendance, beginning with Bobby Thomson's home run to win the 1951 National League pennant at the Polo Grounds for the New York Giants and ending with an underground explosion on the plains of Kazakhstan after the collapse of the Soviet empire. At the center of the novel is a man named Nick Shay, who, as a teen-ager, shot and killed a waiter in the Bronx; the novel follows Shay, and America, from Thomson's homer, that singular moment of citywide postwar joy, to a jaundiced maturity. Shay grows up to be an executive specializing in the management of waste. Just as DeLillo's 1988 novel, "Libra," was a kind of fictional biography of Lee Harvey Oswald, "Underworld" also contains imagined public characters, a wealth of them, including J. Edgar Hoover, Frank Sinatra, Jackie Gleason, and Lenny Bruce, as well as Cold War artifacts like a "long-lost" film by Sergei Eisenstein called "Unterwelt," the subway graffiti and murals of inner-city guerrilla painters, a documentary on the Rolling Stones, satellite photographs, and the play-by-play monologue of the Giants broadcaster Russ Hodges.

In the labelling process that passes for popular criticism, DeLillo has been called "the chief shaman of the paranoid school of American fiction"—and not without reason. Even DeLillo allows that the thread running through his books is about "living in dangerous times," about plots and conspiracies, about troubled men inhabiting small rooms. But, for all the cramped spaces and sweaty foreboding in the novels, "Underworld" included, what's missing from the critical work about DeLillo is the humor, the way the language undercuts, even redeems, the darkness of the landscapes. "Underworld" is the black comedy of the Cold War; it is full of sentences that capture, with the choice of the odd word, a moment in American history. Here is Shay in a contemporary restaurant:

> The waitress brought a chilled fork for my lifestyle salad. Big Sims was eating a cheeseburger with three kinds of cheddar, each described in detail on the menu. There was a crack in the wall from the tremor of the day before and when Sims laughed I saw his mouth cat's-cradled with filaments of gleaming cheese.

Although DeLillo has never had a best-seller, Scribner paid nearly a million dollars for "Underworld," and Scott Rudin, the producer of "Clueless" and "The First Wives' Club," has bought the movie rights. With a mixture of amusement and resignation, DeLillo has agreed to do his public part, but he has tried to keep things within reason. When he and I first talked on the phone to arrange a meeting at his house, DeLillo said, "I'd ask that you not tell anyone where I live, specifically speaking. You can say Westchester." We met, then, on a summer morning at the agreed-upon hour at the agreed-upon unmentionable train station.

To meet DeLillo, at first, is to meet someone who seems to have sanded away all trace of authorial ego or personal affect: his voice is a flat, wry monotone with just a trace of Bronx; he wears enormous and very thick glasses; his clothes tend toward mail-order jeans, denim work shirts, chinos. His life is equally Dionysian: four hours of writing in the morning, a few miles around a local high-school track at midday ("trees, birds, drizzle"), and then more writing, on into the early evening. Sometimes he will go see a movie. Sometimes he will rent one. DeLillo once said, "A writer takes earnest measures to secure his solitude and then finds endless ways to squander it." He has learned not to squander it much, if at all. When DeLillo started writing, in the mid-sixties, he worked sporadically, and it was only over time that he developed his athlete's focus and rigor, the sense of responsibility, that has allowed him to publish so steadily since "Americana."

"I didn't become serious about fiction for a long time," he said as we settled into his spare living room. The room is

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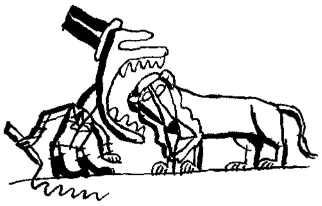
decorated with a few antiques, a few books, some CDs, and fresh flowers. "I didn't have the ambition, the sense of discipline. I had no idea what was demanded of a writer who wanted to be serious about his work, and it took me a long, long time to develop this. It didn't occur to me then that much more was demanded out of me, and much more was at stake in day-to-day work. You know, you become a better writer by getting older, by living longer."

DeLillo did not map out the architecture of "Underworld" and then begin. The process was much more intuitive, mysterious, floundering. There was never an outline. The writing began with a twenty-five-thousand-word burst—a set piece, which became the novel's prologue. It opens with a black kid named Cotter Martin sneaking into the Polo Grounds and then, like a movie camera that widens its focus, takes in the crowd. The opening, which first appeared as a novella called "Pafko at the Wall" in *Harper's*, is one of the most extraordinary performances in contemporary American fiction. DeLillo is able to get the wise-guy interplay among the Hollywood biggies in Leo Durocher's private box (Gleason vomiting on Sinatra's lisle socks), the fears and pleasure of Cotter in his fugitive seat, the animal movements of the crowd, the action on the field, the city's ecstatic reactions beyond, even J. Edgar Hoover surreptitiously studying a small reproduction of a Brueghel painting ("the meatblood colors and massed bodies"). Hoover, sitting in his box, knows that while the game is being played the Soviet Union is secretly testing a nuclear weapon in Kazakhstan, and he thinks, What secret history are they writing? DeLillo's focus, his camera, seems to career around the ballpark, from scene to scene, face to face, mind to mind, taking it all in, as if at once.



After the home run has been hit, he ends the set piece by focussing on Russ Hodges, the broadcaster:

> This is the thing that will pulse in his brain come old age and double vision and dizzy spells—the surge sensation, the leap of people already standing, that bolt of noise and joy when the ball went in. This is the people's history and it has flesh and breath that quicken to the force of this old safe game of ours, and fans at the Polo Grounds today will be able to tell their grandchildren—they'll be the gassy old men leaning into the next century and trying to convince anyone willing to listen, pressing in with medicine breath, that they were here when it happened.
>
> The raincoat drunk is running the bases. They see him round first, his hands paddling the air to keep him from drifting into right field. He approaches second in a burst of coattails and limbs and untied shoelaces and swinging belt. They see he is going to slide and they stop and watch him leave his feet.
>
> All the fragments of the afternoon collect around his airborne form. Shouts, batcracks, full bladders and stray yawns, the sand-grain manyness of things that can't be counted.
>
> It is all falling indelibly into the past.

WHILE the Giants were playing the Dodgers for the '51 pennant, DeLillo was in a dentist's office on Crotona Avenue in the Bronx. He was, naturally, a Yankees fan, so he was mainly waiting it out to see who the next National League victim would be. Thomson's homer was not for him what it was for Giants fans. But forty years later, as he read an anniversary account of the game in the newspaper, he began to think about the event, how it seemed unrepeatable, the communal joy of it married, as it was on the front page of the *Times* in 1951, to the nuclear explosion in Kazakhstan. "Somebody seemed to be wanting to tell me something here," DeLillo said to me.

For a long time, DeLillo has been interested in the passage in John Cheever's journals where he wrote, after attending a ballgame at Shea Stadium, "The task of an American writer is not to describe the misgivings of a woman taken in adultery as she looks out of a window at the rain but to describe 400 people under the lights reaching for a foul ball . . . [or] the faint thunder as 10,000 people, at the bottom of the eighth, head for the exits. The sense of moral judgments embodied in a migratory vastness."

"I had no idea this would be a novel," DeLillo said. "All I wanted to do was write a fictional account of this ballgame, and, for the first time ever, I was writing something whose precise nature I could not gauge. I didn't know whether I was writing a short story, a short novel, or a novel. But I did know that the dimensions of the Polo Grounds were my boundaries. I had no idea that I would go beyond this until after I finished.

"The prologue is written with a sort of super-omniscience. There are sentences that may begin in one part of the ballpark and end in another. I wanted to open up the sentence. They become sort of travel-happy; they travel from one person's mind to another. I did it largely because it was pleasurable. It was baseball itself that provided a kind of freedom that perhaps I hadn't quite experienced before. It was the game."

After the prologue, "Underworld" cuts to 1992 and begins to work backward through the years of the Cold War, so that the day of the game, October 3, 1951, and the day Nick Shay shoots the waiter, October 4, 1951, are separated by forty years of narrative. The mechanical device that travels through the narrative as it weaves back and forth in time is the baseball—the baseball that Bobby Thomson hit into the seats at the Polo Grounds, the ball that Cotter Martin grabs and takes home, the ball that collectors, Nick Shay included, covet as a talisman of history. The ball is a kind of grail. Many of DeLillo's old themes are in "Underworld": the increasing power of the image and the media in the modern world; the uncertainty of American life after the Kennedy assassination; a sense of national danger; men and women who live outside the mainstream of ordinary life and language. There is even the whiff, here and there, of that most singular DeLillo trademark: paranoia. But, more often, "Underworld" is a darkly funny satire of postwar language, manner, and obsessions.

DeLillo takes a Nabokovian delight in the American language. Just as the names of American schoolchildren are catalogued in "Lolita" as if they were Homeric ships, DeLillo lists the words of the fifties—"breezeway," "crisper," "sectional," "broadloom," "stacking chairs," "scatter cushions," "storage walls"—and recounts the small tragedy of a housewife at that techno-crazed moment in history: "She'd recently bought a new satellite-shaped vacuum cleaner that she loved to push across the room because it hummed softly and seemed futuristic and hopeful but she was forced to regard it ruefully now, after Sputnik, a clunky object filled with self-remorse."

DELILLO'S greatest feat of literary discipline until now was his ability to look away from his native ground, the Fordham section of the Bronx. It is hard to imagine a writer keeping such vivid local colors out of his work for so long. On a stifling, fly-blown morning this summer, DeLillo led me down Arthur Avenue, the heart of the Italian Bronx, past grocery stores and pasta joints, and said, "There was a Mob hit here when I was a kid—a mobster killed while he was buying fruit. I think it must have been a model for that scene in 'The Godfather' when Mario Puzo has Don Corleone getting shot while he's buying fruit in the street. He was a mobster from City Island who came here to shop. There were actually three events like that when I was growing up. One was the uncle of a kid I knew. And the other was in a liquor store." On feast days on Arthur Avenue, the women dressed in brown robes and pinned dollar bills to the plaster flanks of Jesus. On summer nights, the area was dense with games—stickball, softball, stoopball, bocce—and radios were playing and the fire hydrant sprayed and on the roof the women yelled down at the kids for killing the water pressure. Dion and the Belmonts lived up the street. John Garfield went to P.S. 45 when he was still Julius Garfinkle. The great Paddy Chayevsky script "Marty" was filmed in the neighborhood, and when it came out "we felt as if our existence had been justified," DeLillo said.

"I'll show you the old house," he said, and he headed to the corner of 182nd Street and Adams Place. The house is a narrow, three-story place with patchy asbestos shingles. DeLillo grew up here with his parents, both immigrants from Italy, his sister, his aunt and uncle, and their three kids. An old man was sitting on the front steps. He had a broad belly that stretched and belled out the T-shirt he was wearing. It read, "You Idiot, Your Fly Is Open." Shy and friendly, DeLillo said hello and said he'd lived here many years ago.

"You wanna again?" the old man said, with a thick southern-Italian accent. "I sell you a hunnert twenny-five thousand."

DeLillo smiled and said, "See this brick gate? My father built that!"

"Stop tensing your abdominals!"

• •

"A hunnert twenny-five thousand," the man replied.

We were by now sweating, parboiled, but there was nothing much open. Finally, DeLillo found a pastry and coffee shop that featured working air-conditioning. After we sat down, I asked him why he'd waited until he had filled a substantial shelf with novels before turning to the Bronx in his fiction. In "Underworld," Nick Shay grows up in an apartment building near DeLillo's old house.

"I needed to wait thirty years before writing about it to do it justice," DeLillo said. "I needed this distance. Also, I needed to write about it in a much larger context. I couldn't write a novel about a background and a place without putting it into a deeper setting. I plunged into the Bronx in my early stories, but the stories weren't very good. I wouldn't even care to look at them now. They were a kind of literary proletarian story. They were about working-class men under duress. I remember one was about a man who'd been evicted from his house, and he was outside sitting on the sidewalk surrounded by his possessions."

DeLillo went to Cardinal Hayes High School ("where I slept") and to Fordham University ("where I majored in something called 'communication arts' "). His father worked as a payroll clerk at Metropolitan Life, in Manhattan. "You know that Graham Greene book called 'England Made Me'? New York made me," DeLillo said. "There's a sensibility, a sense of humor, an approach, a sort of dark approach to things that's part New York, and maybe part growing up Catholic, and that, as far as I'm concerned, is what shapes my work far more than anything I read. I did have some wonderful reading experiences, particularly 'Ulysses.' I read it first when I was quite young, and then again when I was about twenty-five. And this was important. I was very taken by the beauty of the language—particularly the first three or four chapters. I can remember reading this book in a part of my room that was usually sunny. It was a very strong experience. But I didn't read as a kid, and certainly no one read to us. This was not part of our tradition. People spoke, and yelled, but there wasn't much reading. I didn't take to nineteenth-century English material at all. It was a great struggle, a great burden, I couldn't concentrate on it. Once, I had to write a paper on a Dickens novel, and Dickens, of course, is easy. I just read the Classic Comics version and managed to get through. It's a struggle to emerge from a place like the Bronx and settle in a place like Manhattan. It represents an enormous journey that involves manners, language, what you wear, almost everything."

Today, Fordham is an easy train ride south for DeLillo, and when he was thinking about the Bronx sections that dominate the last few hundred pages of "Underworld" he would visit the neighborhood: the alleys of the apartment house where Nick Shay grew up, the projects a mile to the south, the cathedral-like Paradise movie theatre on the Grand Concourse, which has since been gutted and left to rot. DeLillo, like any New Yorker, talks about neighborhood in narrow terms. When we passed Bathgate Avenue, he pointed out the street sign and said, "I keep out of there. That's Doctorow's turf." There are still plenty of Italians along the spine of Arthur Avenue, but there are also blacks, Hispanics, Albanians, Bosnians. Walking these streets helped him summon the faces and the mortar of the place, but it also helped him remember the psyche of the times—the way people knew what they knew, the way they so rarely lived in the larger world, except when they took the Third Avenue El downtown into Manhattan and glimpsed other lives through open apartment windows. And since "Underworld" is about the greater world, about the Cold War, his trips helped him remember how he and his neighbors had lived in threatening times.

"In those days, the way you absorbed the news was different," he said over the hiss and gurgle of the espresso machine. "You would have to go to the movies to really see something. There would be a cartoon and a short on the explosion of the hydrogen bomb. It was part of the entertainment, somehow—an extension of the movie."

In 1959, after college, DeLillo moved to a tiny apartment in Murray Hill, the sort of place where the refrigerator is in the bathroom. At first, he had a full-time job as a copywriter at Ogilvy, Benson & Mather. His friends were other copywriters, funny, sophisticated guys "who were like a combination of Jerry Lewis, Lenny Bruce, and Noël Coward." They went together to the Museum of Modern Art and the Village Vanguard, to the movies that were coming out of Italy and France at the time. In the meantime, DeLillo started work on "Americana."

It was a tentative start, but after a few years, once DeLillo got a handle on his novel and convinced himself that he was a real writer, he quit Ogilvy, Benson & Mather. To make a little money, he took freelance jobs writing copy for furniture catalogues, dialogue for a cartoon, a script for a television commercial. In 1971, "Americana" was published and was pronounced promising, and in 1975 he married Barbara Bennett. They have no children.

"It's a very lucky life for me," DeLillo said. "I've not been distracted by many of the things that other novelists are distracted by. I earn enough money to make a living at it, for one thing. I learned to live very, very cheaply. And family complications have not been a source of difficulty for me, as they are for almost everyone else."

"Look, fella—can't you see this is an executive smokers' group?"

DELILLO'S early novels—"Americana," "End Zone," "Great Jones Street," "Ratner's Star," "Players," and "Running Dog"—and then the triumphant run of "The Names," "White Noise," "Libra," "Mao II," and "Underworld," radiate a sensibility tempered in the sixties and seventies. But, unlike some of his contemporaries and friends, DeLillo has kept mainly to the political sidelines. "I took part in a number of war protests, but only as a sort of marcher in the rear ranks," he said. "I was very interested in rock music. At the same time, I have to say that I didn't buy a single record. I listened to it on the radio. I let the culture wash over me. I used marijuana, not frequently but more or less regularly. I found the sixties extremely interesting, and, at the same time that all this was happening—enormous social disruption—I also felt that there was a curious ennui, a boredom, which actually may be part of my first novel. I think it's something I sensed around me, which would seem to be completely at odds with what you were seeing and hearing in the streets. I suppose what I felt for much of this period was a sense of unbelonging, of not being part of any kind of official system. Not as a form of protest but as a kind of separateness. It was an alienation, but not a political alienation, predominantly. It was more spiritual."

When DeLillo was a young man in the city, he often went to look at the Abstract Expressionists at the Museum of Modern Art. This summer, we met one afternoon at the museum and walked through exhibits featuring the great Soviet poster artists of the twenties, the Stenberg brothers, a series of photographs by Cindy Sherman, and a history of the still-life that began with a Cézanne and ended with a flat white slab covered with milk, the sight of which caused DeLillo's brow to arch. "Nice milk," he said.

Later, over lunch at the museum restaurant, I asked him about the way those museum visits might have influenced his work; how, for that matter, all the excitements of his youth—Joyce, Italian and French movies of the sixties, bebop, and rock music—figured in his novels.

"That's very difficult for me to answer," he said. "But the influence is al-

WAVES IN AUGUST

There is a war in the distance
with the distance growing smaller
the field glasses lying at hand
are for keeping it far away

I thought I was getting better
about that returning childish
wish to be living somewhere else
that I knew was impossible
and now I find myself wishing
to be here to be alive here
it is impossible enough
to still be the wish of a child

in youth I hid a boat under
the bushes beside the water
knowing I would want it later
and come back and would find it there
someone else took it and left me
instead the sound of the water
with its whisper of vertigo

terror reassurance an old
old sadness it would seem we knew
enough always about parting
but we have to go on learning
as long as there is anything

—W. S. Merwin

most metaphysical. I don't think I could make any kind of direct connection. I think fiction comes from everything you've ever done, and said, and dreamed, and imagined. It comes from everything you've read and haven't read. It comes from all the things that are in the air. At some point, you begin to write sentences and paragraphs that don't sound like other writers'. And for me the crux of the whole matter is language, and the language a writer eventually develops. If you're talking about Hemingway, the Hemingway sentence is what makes Hemingway. It's not the bullfights or the safaris or the wars, it's a clear, direct, and vigorous sentence. It's the simple connective—the word 'and' that strings together the segments of a long Hemingway sentence. The word 'and' is more important to Hemingway's work than Africa or Paris. I think my work comes out of the culture of the world around me. I think that's where my language comes from. That's where my themes come from. I don't think it comes from other people. One's personality and vision are shaped by other writers, by movies, by paintings, by music. But the work itself, you know—sentence by sentence, page by page—it's much too intimate, much too private, to come from anywhere but deep within the writer himself. It comes out of all the time a writer wastes. We stand around, look out the window, walk down the hall, come back to the page, and, in those intervals, something subterranean is forming, a literal dream that comes out of daydreaming. It's too deep to be attributed to clear sources."

I asked DeLillo if he recognized himself when he read academic criticism or journalistic reviews of his work.

"Not really," he said. "What's almost never discussed is what you and I have just been talking about: the language in which a book is framed. And there's a good reason. It's hard to talk about. It's hard to write about. And so one receives a broad analysis of, perhaps, the social issues in one's work but rarely anything about the way the writer gets there."

The most famous political critique of DeLillo came from the right, a barrage that began, in 1985, with Bruce Bawer writing in *The New Criterion* and was then backed up, double-barrelled, in the Washington *Post* by George Will and the paper's book critic, Jonathan Yardley.

In his essay "Don DeLillo's America," Bawer began with the dubious assertion that while one can always find DeLillo's books in stores it is very hard to find some titles by Fitzgerald, Hemingway, or Faulkner. Even more mystifying than the Barnes & Noble angle was Bawer's idea that DeLillo's novels are not believable novels but, rather, "tracts, designed to batter us, again and again, with a single idea: that life in America today is boring, benumbing, dehumanized." He went on, "It's better, DeLillo seems to say in one novel after another, to be a marauding, murderous maniac—and therefore a *human*—than to sit still for America as it is, with its air-conditioners, assembly lines, television sets, supermarkets, synthetic fabrics, and credit cards. At least when you're living a life of primitive violence, you're closer to the mystery at the heart of it all." A novel such as "White Noise," Bawer wrote, is studded with cheap left-wing "Philosophy McNuggets."

Will, for his part, interrupted his ruminations on the 1988 Presidential race to take offense at "Libra," a novel speculating on the character and responsibility of Lee Harvey Oswald, as "sandbox existentialism" and "an act of literary vandalism and bad citizenship." He treats DeLillo as if he were a dangerous crackpot, wielding an un-American weapon—a gift for prose. That DeLillo would dare call into question the veracity of the Warren Commission, or that he would speculate about the psychology of a murderer and the culture itself, "traduces an ethic of literature." And that DeLillo would describe the writer as an outsider in that culture is merely a "burst of sophomoric self-dramatization," because, after all, "Henry James, Jane Austen, George Eliot and others were hardly outsiders." Will went on, "DeLillo's notion of the writer outside the mainstream of daily life is so radical" that it "stops just a short step from declaring the writer as kin to Oswald, who, as a defector, was the ultimate outsider." Wow! Don DeLillo as *almost* kin to Lee Harvey Oswald.

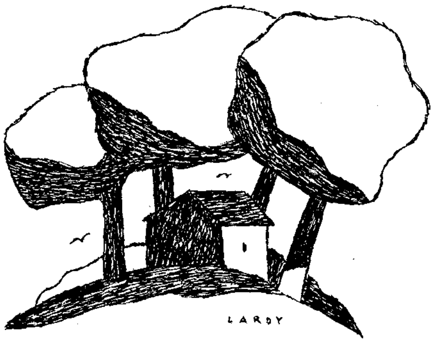
"I don't take it seriously, but being called a 'bad citizen' is a compliment to a novelist, at least to my mind," DeLillo said. "That's exactly what we ought to do. We ought to be bad citizens. We ought to, in the sense that we're writing against what power represents, and often what government represents, and what the corporation dictates, and what consumer consciousness has come to mean. In that sense, if we're bad citizens, we're doing our job. Will also said I blamed America for Lee Harvey Oswald. But I don't blame America for Lee Harvey Oswald, I blame America for George Will. I don't think there is any sense in 'Libra' in which America is the motive force that sends Oswald up to that sixth-floor window. In fact, Oswald is interesting because he was, at least by his own rights, a strongly political man, who not only defected to the Soviet Union but tried to assassinate the right-wing figure General Walker about seven months before the assassination of President Kennedy. I think in that seven months his life unravelled. I think he lost a grip on his political consciousness, and on almost everything else around him. And I think he became the forerunner of all those soft white young men of the late sixties and early seventies, who went around committing crimes of convenience, shooting at whatever political figure or celebrity happened to drift into range." DeLillo said he didn't pretend to know the answer to the assassination riddle, though he thought there was probably a second gunman. When DeLillo visited the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository museum, he wrote in the guestbook, "Still waiting for the man on the grassy knoll."

DeLillo has no idea how "Underworld" will be absorbed into the culture, if at all. He seems not to worry about it. In fact, he doesn't think that the increasingly marginal status of the serious novelist is necessarily awful. By being marginal, he may end up being more significant, more respected, sharper in his observations. Not long ago, DeLillo wrote a letter to his friend the novelist Jonathan Franzen. Franzen is a younger writer, one with great verbal skill and narrative imagination, and DeLillo's letter sounds very much like reassurance to a successor:

> The novel is whatever novelists are doing at a given time. If we're not doing the big social novel fifteen years from now, it'll probably mean our sensibilities have changed in ways that make such work less compelling to us—we won't stop because the market dried up. The writer leads, he doesn't follow. The dynamic lives in the writer's mind, not in the size of the audience. And if the social novel lives, but only barely, surviving in the cracks and ruts of the culture, maybe it will be taken more seriously, as an endangered spectacle. A reduced context but a more intense one. . . . Writing is a form of personal freedom. It frees us from the mass identity we see in the making all around us. In the end, writers will write not to be outlaw heroes of some underculture but mainly to save themselves, to survive as individuals.
>
> P.S. If serious reading dwindles to near nothingness, it will probably mean that the thing we're talking about when we use the word "identity" has reached an end.

In "Libra," in "Mao II," and now in "Underworld," DeLillo has increasingly brought the world of power and celebrity into his work—the world of contemporary history. It's likely that he will continue in that direction.

"I think the press of public events has got stronger in the last several decades," he told me. "It's the power of the media, the power of television. But also, I think, there's something in people that, perhaps, has shifted. People seem to need news, any kind—bad news, sensationalistic news, overwhelming news. It seems to be that news is a narrative of our time. It has almost replaced the novel, replaced discourse between people. It replaced families. It replaced a slower, more carefully assembled way of communicating, a more personal way of communicating. In the fifties, news was a kind of sinuous part of life. It flowed in and out in a sort of ordinary, unremarkable way. And now news has impact, largely because of television news. After the earthquake in San Francisco, they showed one house burning, over and over, so that your TV set became a kind of instrument of apocalypse. This happens repeatedly in those endless videotapes that come to life of a bank robbery, or a shooting, or a beating. They repeat, and it's as though they're speeding up time in some way. I think it's induced an apocalyptic sense in people that has nothing to do with the end of the millennium. And it makes us—it makes us consumers of a certain type. We consume these acts of violence. It's like buying products that in fact are images and they are produced in a mass-market kind of fashion. But it's also real, it's real life. It's as though this were our last experience of nature: seeing a guy with a gun totally separate from choreographed movie violence. It's all that we've got left of nature, in a strange way. But it's all happening on our TV set."



The day we were talking, television was filled with images of the fashion designer Gianni Versace shot dead on the street in Miami Beach. DeLillo was interested not so much in the fallen designer as in the instantaneous packaging of the murder, its sudden appearance on every screen and thus in millions of conversations. "People talk about the killing, but they don't talk about what it does to them, to the way they think, and feel, and fear," he said. "They don't talk about what it creates in a larger sense. The truth is, we don't quite know how to talk about this, I don't believe. Maybe that's why some of us write fiction."

"Underworld" ends with the fall of the Soviet Union and its conflict with the West. As DeLillo thinks about the era we're living in, and writing about it, he has also been thinking about a passage in Hermann Broch's novel "The Death of Virgil." "He uses the term 'no longer and not yet,'" DeLillo said. "I think he's referring to the fact that his poet, Virgil, is in a state of delirium, no longer quite alive, and not yet dead. But I think he may also be referring to the interim between paganism and Christianity. And I think of this 'no longer and not yet' in terms of no longer the Cold War and not yet whatever will follow." But six months after finishing "Underworld," he added, the germ of something really new has not yet shown itself.

On the way to the station to drop me off for the train back from Westchester County to the city, DeLillo said, "What happens in between is I drift, I feel a little aimless. I feel a little stupid, because my mind is at odds. It's not trained on a daily basis to concentrate on something, so I feel a little dumb. Time passes in a completely different way. I can't account for a day, a given day. At the end of a day, I don't know what I did." ♦

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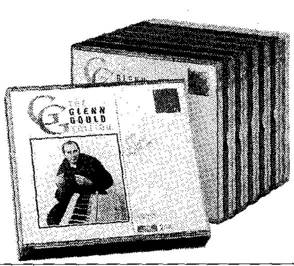

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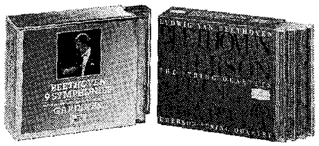

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PERSONAL HISTORY

REQUIEM

The author mourns a friend who kept her own counsel.

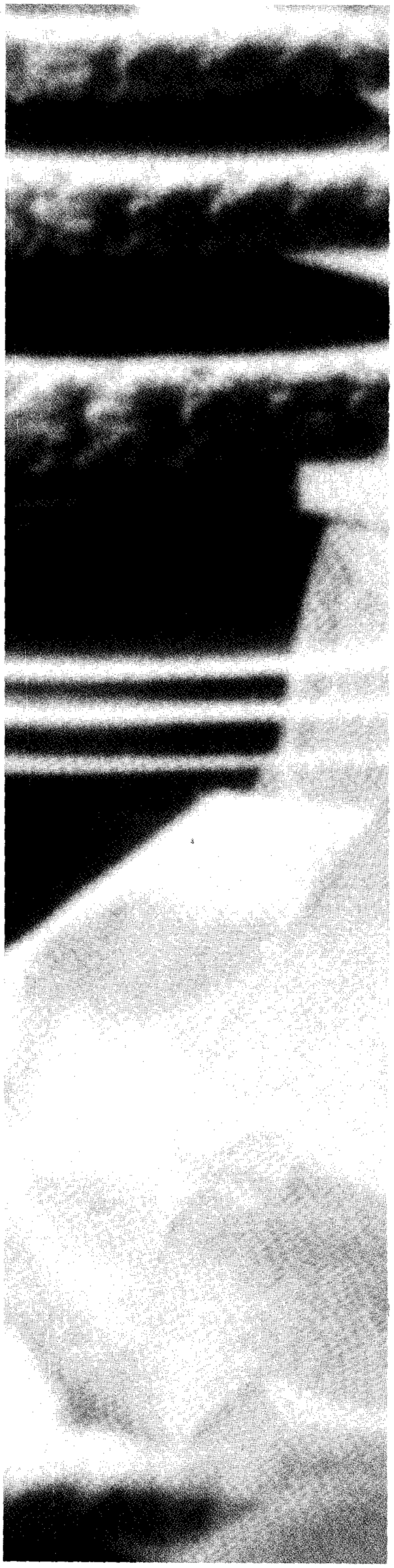
BY CLIVE JAMES

No. It was the first word of that cataclysmic Sunday morning: "no" pronounced through an ascending sob, the consonant left behind in the chest voice as the vowel climbed into the head voice, the pure wail of lament whereby anyone, no matter how tone deaf, for one terrible moment becomes a singer. But there was not one terrible moment. There were, still are, hundreds of them, joining up in a long aria of anguish interrupted only by exhaustion. Hundreds of millions of people who loved her but never met her must be crying like this. Those who did meet her, and knew her faults, should have some detachment. But somehow it works in reverse. The physics of this unprecedented metaphysical explosion, this starburst of regret, are counterintuitive, like relativity. The more you know she was never perfect, the less you, who are not perfect either, are able to detach the loss of her from the loss of yourself, and so you have gone with her, down that Acherontic tunnel by the Pont de l'Alma and into the Halls of Dis, the inane regions, where loneliness is the only thing there is, and the lost are together but can never find each other, because it is like looking for a shadow in the dark.

No, there was not much I knew about her. But I knew it well. At one period, starting either just before or just after her official separation (I can't remember, and although a glance at the dates of her letters to me would tell me, I can't bear to look at them) and ending well before her death, I lunched with her often enough to goad the lurking press into some arch speculation about whether I was helping to mastermind her P.R. campaign, especially on television, my area of expertise. Rather to my secret disappointment, it was taken for granted that there was no romance. (My wife, well aware that she is married to a romantic egomaniac, found that aspect particularly amusing.) When the mid-market tabloids ran a page of photographs featuring the men supposedly in Diana's life, my photograph was always among the venerable, sometimes senescent, advisers, never among the young, handsome, and virile suitors. The assumption was that although she might listen to what her privy counsellors said, she would never look at any of them twice. In my case, that assumption, unlike the one about my role as the éminence grise behind her television adventures, was dead right.

No, there was nothing between me and her beyond a fleeting friendship. Many other men knew her better. Some men knew her intimately, and now, at last, I do not envy them, because what they have in their memories must make loss feel like death. (I never thought I could be sorry for James Hewitt, the dim former cavalry officer who repaid her for her favors by selling his story, but think of where he is now, deprived even of the reason for his ruin, his empty head already rotting on Traitors' Gate.) As for the man who knew her most intimately of all, Prince Charles, he is a man as good and honest as any I have ever met, and I know him well enough to be sure that today he is on the Cross, and wondering whether he will ever be able to come down. My own knowledge of her is minute compared with his and theirs, but now, for the first time, I wish I had never met her at all. Then I might not have loved her, and would not feel like this, or at any rate would feel it less. But I did meet her, and I did love her.

No, it was not a blind love: quite the



She wasn't just beautiful. She was like the sun coming up: coming up giggling.

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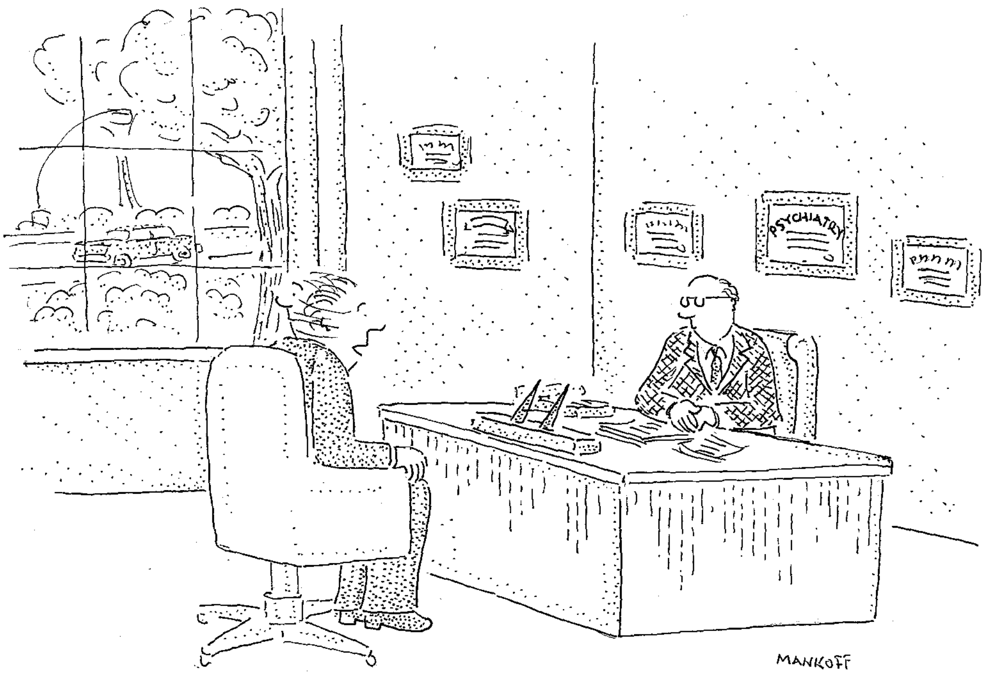


"Excuse me, Doc, my attention wandered. What type of deficit disorder did you say I had?"

• •

opposite. Even before I met her, I had already guessed that she was a handful. After I met her, there was no doubt about it. Clearly on a hair trigger, she was unstable at best, and when the squeeze was on she was a fruitcake on the rampage. But even while reaching this conclusion I was already smitten, and from then on everything I found out about her at first hand, even—especially—her failings and her follies, only made me love her more, because there were none of them that had not once been mine, and some of them still were. In her vivid interior drama I saw my own. I didn't find out much, but what I did find out I found out from close up, from a few feet across a little table; and I knew it certainly, and it made me love her more truly. I was even convinced (this was not for certain, but it was a deep and ineradicable suspicion) that she would get herself killed, and that conviction made me love her to distraction, as if I had become a small part of some majestic tragic poem: an obscure, besotted walk-on mesmerized by the trajectory of a burning angel. I feared for her as I loved her, and the fear intensified the love. It was too much love for so tenuous a liaison, and one of the reasons I never spoke of it in public was a cheaper fear—the simple, adolescent fear of appearing ridiculous.

No, you don't have to tell me. I am appearing ridiculous now, but it is part of the ceremony, is it not? And what flowers have I to send her except my memories? They are less than a wreath, not much more than a nosegay: just a *deuil blanc* table napkin wrapping a few blooms of frangipani, the blossom of broken bread. London has gone quiet; the loudest human sound is the murmur of self-communion; and we are told that half the world has done the same. In the old times, when the plague came, people would cast off their sense of self, say what was on their minds, find what had always been in their minds but had remained unsaid even to themselves, and make love to strangers. There will be no *Totentanz* this time, no orgies, no mass kicking over of the traces. But there will be something of the same liberation from the very British drive to protect the self, and I will be surprised if some of the new openness does not remain. The lake of flowers submerging Kensington Palace has released a perfume that has changed the air. And although those who did not participate in the vigil might sit in judgment on us for our mass delusion, we will judge them, in our turn, for their inhuman detachment.

No, nobody can escape her image in these days after her death—it is as if the planet were being colonized with her replicated smile—and each time I see it, it brings back a reality that was even lovelier. I first saw Diana—the living human being, not the image—at the Cannes Film Festival. Sir Alec Guinness was getting a lifetime-achievement award, I was to be the master of ceremonies at the dinner, and Charles and Diana had come down from London just for the evening. There was a reception beforehand. The whole British film world stood around nursing drinks. It was like watching a movie composed of nothing except cameo appearances. A bit of some TV crew's lighting rig fell on a P.R. girl's head and she regained consciousness in the arms of Roger Moore: she thought she was in a James Bond movie. Then Charles and Diana came in and started working the room. With astonishment, I suddenly found myself on the roster of familiar faces Diana wanted to meet. There she was, right in front of me, and I instantly realized that no kind of film, whether still or moving, had done her justice. She wasn't just beautiful. She was like the sun coming up: coming up giggling. She was giggling as if she had just remembered something funny. "I think it's terrible what you do to those Japanese people. You are *terrible*." She was referring to the clips from Japanese game shows which I screened on the TV program that I hosted each week. I started to protest that they were doing that crazy stuff to each other; it wasn't me doing it to them. But she quickly made it clear that she was only pretending to be shocked. She said she never missed my show and always had it taped if she was out. While I was still feeling as if, all at once, I had been awarded the Booker Prize for fiction, the Nobel Prize in Physics, and the Academy Award for Best Actor, she switched the topic. "Ooh. There's that odious man Maxwell over there. Don't want to meet *him* again. Yuck."

No, she really meant it. She made a face as if she had just sucked a lemon.

And that did it. I was enslaved. Looming hugely at the far side of the stellar throng, the publishing tycoon Robert Maxwell was doing his usual simultaneous impersonation of Victor Mature and King Farouk: a ton and a half of half-cured ham wrapped in a white tuxedo, his pan-scrubber eyebrows dripping condescension like spoiled lard. At the time, the old crook hadn't yet been exposed. Some of the cleverest men in Britain were still working for him and helping to vilify anyone who questioned his credentials. But this young lady, with a head allegedly composed almost entirely of air, had the bastard's number. On the other hand, after knowing me not much more than a minute she had just handed me a story that would have embarrassed the bejesus out of the Royal Family if I had passed it on: it would take only one phone call, and next morning the front page of every British tabloid except Maxwell's *Mirror* would consist almost entirely of the word "Yuck." Either she was brave to the point of insanity or else I radiated trustworthiness. I decided it must be the latter. For the air of complicity she had generated between us in so brief a time, the best word I can think of is "cahoots." We were in cahoots.

No, it couldn't last. With the two-minute mark coming up, she started regretfully signalling that our lifelong friendship would have to be temporarily put on hold. Her pursed lips indicated that although she would rather stay talking to me until Hell froze over, unfortunately her duties called her away to schmooze with far less illustrious people than me. Her mouth saying that she was looking forward to my speech, her eyes saying, "Plant you now and dig you later," she fluttered a few fingertips and swanned off in the direction of Sir Alec. What would she say to him? *Help me, Obi-Wan Kenobi. You're my only hope.* I wish I hadn't just thought of that.

No, I didn't see her again for a long time. But I thought of her often, and especially when I saw Charles. In those days, I was one of the outer ring of his advisers. The system worked—probably still works—like this: The inner ring of advisers are on call full time for anything. In the outer ring, you get called to the center when the upcoming job touches on your areas of competence: in my case, television, Australia, and occasionally the arts. Flattered to get the nod, I gladly made trips to see him. Born to a life in which people magically appeared when needed, he sometimes had trouble remembering that his fifteen minutes with you at Highgrove or Sandringham would cost you a whole working day, but apart from that he was impeccably sensitive, courteous, and just plain thoughtful—a quality of his which is continually underestimated, and one which will make him a great king when his turn comes, as come it must. (Diana's declaration, in her "Panorama" interview, that Charles might never reign was the single biggest mistake she ever made, but haven't *you* said foolish things about the person you loved after it all went wrong?) Our meetings, though invariably friendly and increasingly funny, were always strictly business, so it was no surprise that Diana wasn't around. But when my wife and I asked him to dinner he came alone, his wife was never mentioned, and sadly I began to realize that that was no surprise either. The word was out that they were sticking together for the sake of the monarchy and the children but were otherwise going their separate ways.

No, it couldn't go on like that. I still think it should have, and right up to the divorce I published articles in *The Spectator* saying that they owed it to all of us to stick together somehow, or else the press would be confirmed in its hideous new role as a sort of latter-day Church of England with witch-finders for priests. But I was making the fundamental mistake of being more royalist than the King. The two people at the center of events were pursuing happiness, American style, and it was becoming more obvious all the time that they had known enough unhappiness to justify the pursuit. During Charles's fortieth-birthday party, at Buckingham Palace, I met her again. There were no cahoots this time. She said that she and the boys had enjoyed my latest documentary and that she was glad to see me, but she didn't seem to be glad about anything else: the lights in her face were dimmed down to about three-quarter

"I'm finding it difficult to keep alive the little embezzler within."

strength, so she looked merely lovely, at a time when her full incandescence should have been outshining the chandeliers. Charles did his formidable best to jolly everyone along. The Duchess of York chortled around in her usual irrepressible manner, a bumper car in taffeta. It was fun to go for a piss, stand in a reverse lineup of hunched dinner jackets, and gradually discover that I was the only man staring at the porcelain who was not a crowned head of Europe. But generally there was something missing, and nobody could be in any doubt what it was. She was still there physically, but her soul had gone AWOL; and without that soul the party had no life.

No life, and no future. The press was piling it on by then, and steadily the intrusiveness got worse. It became known that she was trying to lessen the effects by getting a few media figures on her side. It was manipulation, but what else does a marionette dream of except pulling strings? So I thought I knew what it was about when she sent me an invitation to lunch at Kensington Palace. I thought there would be at least half a dozen of us there to receive the gentle suggestion that a few supportive words would not come amiss. (Even for my generation, words like "supportive" are losing their inverted commas by now: her unashamed use of me-speak has influenced the language.) But after I was shown up the staircase to the sitting room I found myself alone. When she came into the room, it was as if that first conversation in Cannes had been frozen by the pause button and now the button had been touched again to re-start the tape. "Sorry there aren't any film stars," she said. "There's just me. Hope you don't get bored." The cahoots were back. We sat down at a small table in the next room and immediately established the protocol that would become standard, and which I will always cherish as one of the best running gags I was ever involved in. She ate like a bird while encouraging me to eat like a wolf, as if I weren't being fed properly at home. There was a catch under the joke: that I *had* a home, she made it clear, was enviable. She envied me my long marriage. When I told her that I had been a bad husband and a neglectful father, and that my guilt had begun to erode my peace of mind, she said that I must have done *something* right, if we were all still together, so I should take comfort from that. Her own marriage, she said, was coming apart. She told me why and how. I could hardly credit my ears. Armed with nothing else except what she told me then, I could have gone to a telephone and blown the whole thing sky high. But the cahoots ruled that out. The tacit bargain was: You tell me what you can't tell anyone else and I'll tell you what I can't tell anyone else, and then neither of us can tell anyone else about what we said.

No, it wasn't mutual therapy. But I suppose it was a mind game. There must have been dozens of other people that she played it with, but she infallibly picked those who would never break the deal. (If she had chosen her lovers on the same principle, she would have given a lot fewer hostages to fortune, but desire doesn't work like that.) She would make each of her platonic cavaliers believe, or at any rate want to believe, that he was the only one. The joker in her real life doubled as the ace of diamonds in the game: it was her childhood. Everything in her tormented psyche turned on what had happened to her at the age of six, when her parents separated and left her to a loneliness that nothing could cure. Then, while I was clearing her plate after I had cleared mine, she popped the question: "Something like that happened to you, didn't it?" It was the Princess of Wales who was asking me, so I gave her the answer. Yes, it did. When I was six, my mother got the news that my father had been killed on the way home from the war.

No, my mother cried. No, no, oh no. I was the witness of her distress, I couldn't help her, and I had been helpless ever since. I sometimes thought, I said, that everything I had ever written, built, or achieved had been in order to offset that corrosive guilt, and that I loved the world of women because I feared the world of men. Diana touched my wrist, and that was it: we were both six years old.

No, it was no trick. It might have been a mind game, but her mind was her most vivid reality, the battlefield on which she looked for peace. It was a good mind, incidentally. Of all the poisonous dreck ever written about Diana in the newspapers, the most despicable was based on the assumption that she was stupid. Journalists who read three books a year and had scarcely two ideas to rub together about anything called her an ignoramus. The truth was the opposite. Schopenhauer ("Chopin who?" I can hear her say), who was a great reader himself, pointed out the danger of letting books get between us and experience. What Diana knew was based on experience, and she knew a lot, especially about the mind. Well aware that her own was damaged, she sought comfort from those who would admit to the same condition. She spent too much time with gurus, spiritualists, and exotic healers, but that wasn't frivolity: it was desperation. For the rest of the time, which was most of it, she had a remarkable capacity to do exactly the opposite of what she was notorious for: far from being obsessed with her own injuries, she would forget herself in the injuries of others. It was the secret of her appeal to the sick and the wounded. When she walked into a hospital ward, everyone in it recognized her as one of them, because she treated them as if they could have been her. They *were* her. She was just their souls, free for a day, in a beautiful body that walked so straight and breathed so easily. The sick, she would often say, were more real to her than the well: their guard was down, they were themselves.

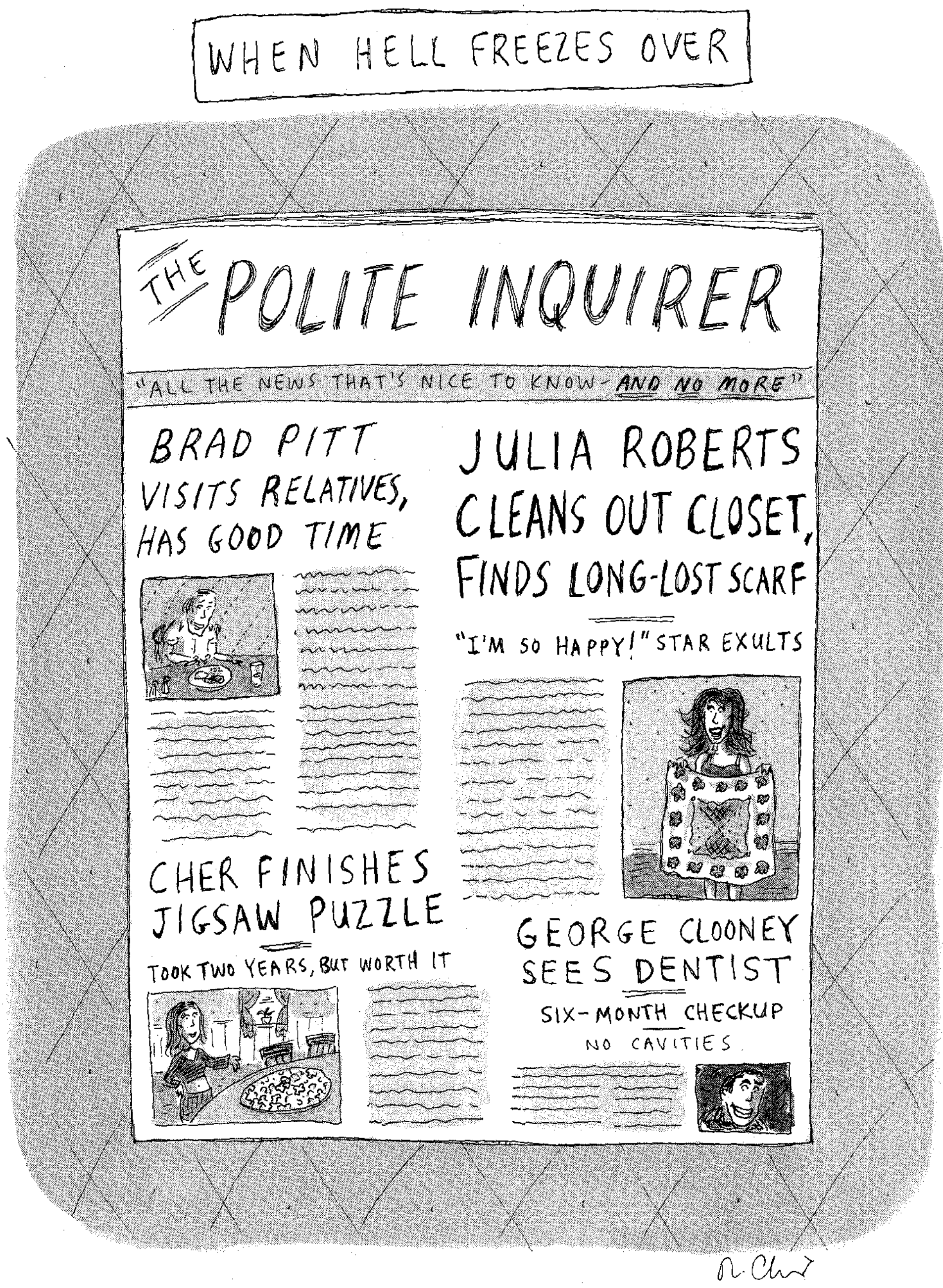
No, I didn't figure all that out straightaway, but as time went on it became more apparent to me that I was her patient. I missed her after that first lunch, with a mild version of the forlorn longing I have seen among friends of mine when their shrinks go on holiday. So I did something so presumptuous I still don't believe I had the brass neck to go through with it. *I* asked *her* to lunch. The separation was practically official by now, she was kind of up for grabs, so why not, you know, *ask her to lunch*? I made the phone call to her secretary and hung up feeling like someone who was going to get a flea in his ear the size of a hummingbird. But ten minutes later the secretary was back on the line. The Princess of Wales would be delighted. How about the Caprice?

No, I didn't get there half an hour early—only twenty minutes. I took up

GLOBE PHOTOS

I know the Prince well enough to be sure that today he is on the Cross, and wondering whether he will ever be able to come down.

my elaborately casual position at the corner table, double-cleaned my fingernails with my door key, and watched the forecourt through the window. As always, she was on time to the minute. When she stepped from the chauffeur-driven car, it wasn't just the way she looked that stymied me. *No escort.* She had been threatening for a while to start going out without an escort, and now she was actually doing it, the crazy little twit. The chill of fear I felt was probably useful in making me appear cool as I rose for an air kiss that stopped every knife and fork in the room, as if time had been switched off. The rattle of cutlery started again after she sat down, and there we were, tête-à-tête. It wasn't cahoots yet, though. By this time, two camps had formed, Charles's and Diana's. Diana's people were busy calling Charles a stuffed shirt, and Charles's people were just as busy calling Diana a dingbat. I wanted to make it clear to her that I was for both of them, and against anything that would make them irreconcilable. I couldn't, either in public or in private, say a word against the Prince. Putting it in jokey form—always her preferred way of hearing a lecturette—I told her that if we were caught talking high treason she would be given the privilege of dying by the sword, whereas I, a commoner and a colonial, would be lucky if they even bothered to sharpen the axe. She laughed, said she understood completely, and made it evident that she admired Charles's qualities as much as I did. Things bubbled along nicely. Cahoots again. I got both our meals to eat as usual, and from the next table the director-general of the BBC was looking at me as if I were a combination of Errol Flynn and Neil Armstrong. He was stuck with the Home Secretary. Christ, what fun she was. But the chill of fear came back when she started to talk about the possibility of going on television with a personal interview. I knew it wouldn't be with me, but that wasn't the reason I counselled her against it. I said if that happened the two-camps thing would go nuclear, and continue until there was nothing left. She would be on the run forever, and there would be nowhere to go. Nowhere would be far enough away. She seemed convinced, but of course she was pretending. She had already decided.


WHEN HELL FREEZES OVER
THE POLITE INQUIRER
"ALL THE NEWS THAT'S NICE TO KNOW—AND NO MORE"
BRAD PITT VISITS RELATIVES, HAS GOOD TIME
JULIA ROBERTS CLEANS OUT CLOSET, FINDS LONG-LOST SCARF
"I'M SO HAPPY!" STAR EXULTS
CHER FINISHES JIGSAW PUZZLE
TOOK TWO YEARS, BUT WORTH IT
GEORGE CLOONEY SEES DENTIST
SIX-MONTH CHECKUP
NO CAVITIES

No, she wasn't always the straight goods. She often pretended. She would listen to advice and warnings that—as you'd later discover—had been rendered obsolete by what she had already done, and pretend to consider them. Then, when the news came out, you found that she had been watching you lead yourself up the garden path. It could hurt.

No, I don't think she was being malicious, or even mischievous. There was just a lot of stuff she couldn't share. At least once, however, she lied to me outright. "I really had nothing to do with that Andrew Morton book," she said. "But after my friends talked to him I had to stand by them." She looked me straight in the eye when she said this, so I could see how plausible she could be when she was telling a whopper. I would have been terminally pissed off if I hadn't suspected that she knew I knew, and just didn't want to be remembered as admitting it. In the "Panorama" interview, she did admit it, so I had two reasons for feeling that historic program as a personal wound, quite apart from my premonition that it would wound her. It multiplied her popularity, but it propelled her in the direction I had spent a lot of time telling her she should never think of going in: over the wall, out of the country, away from her protection.

No, there was no chance she would listen. She *hated* the protection. She saw the protectors as assailants. She believed, against all the evidence of her own beautiful eyes, that there was some kind of enchanted place called Abroad, where she would be understood and where she could lead a more normal life. This place called Abroad became a recurring theme in future conversations at other restaurants. Kensington Place, in Kensington Church Street near Notting Hill Gate, was one of her favorite hangouts, and she thought it funny that I always booked a table against the back wall, instead of up front, near the window. There was an acre of unshielded glass and she—*she*—wanted to sit near it. It scared me rigid. Sometimes I could barely eat my own lunch, let alone hers. But it seemed she would rather have gone down in a hail of broken glass than live in fear. She could live in her own fear—the fear of never finding happiness, of never making the pieces fit, of Mummy and Daddy never being together again—but could never live in mine, the fear for her life.

No, she never took my advice even once. Well, just once. Before she went to Japan on her big solo diplomatic trip, she asked me what would be the best thing she could do there, apart from all the hospitals and stuff. She knew that I was a student of the Japanese language and Japanese literature, and she thought I might have some nifty scheme up my sleeve. I told her I did, but it wouldn't be easy. I told her that if she learned even a few words of the language—just the standard phrases about how pleased she was to be there—she would knock them out. I could lend her my teacher, a gentle but determined little woman called Shinko. Diana, after her standard protestations about being too thick, said she was up for it. Shinko, quietly experiencing the same emotions as I would have done if I had been asked to teach the Emperor of Japan croquet, marched up to Kensington Palace and did the job. Diana flew to Japan, addressed a hundred and twenty-five million people in their own language, and made the most stunning impact there since Hirohito told them that the war was over.

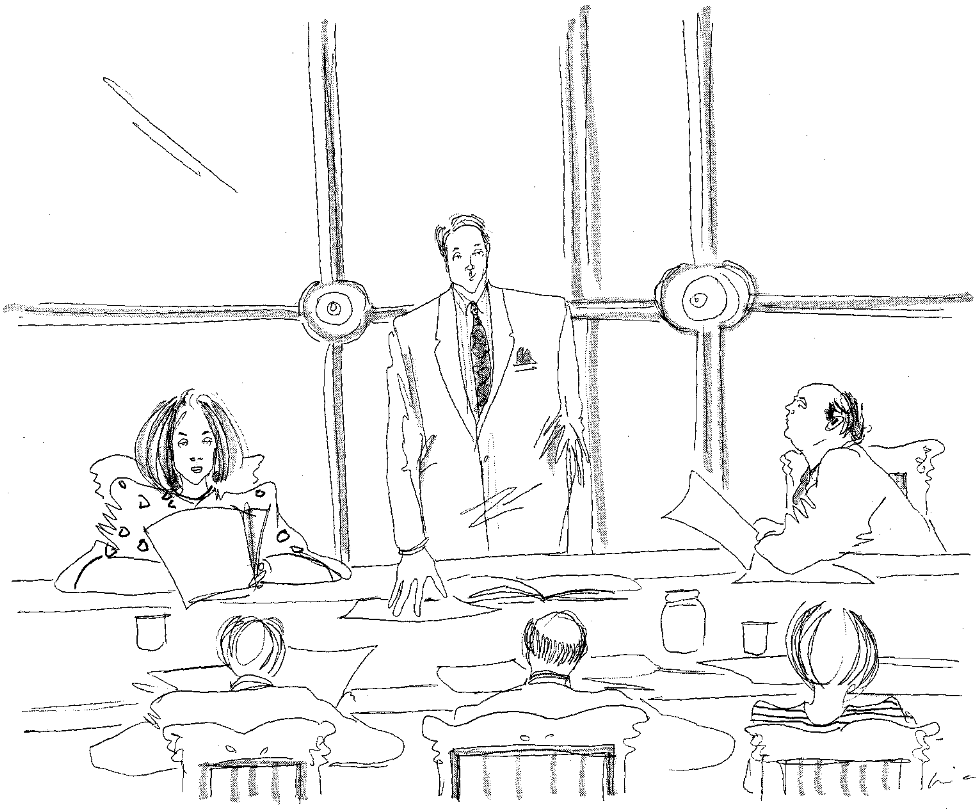
No, she didn't forget. When she got back, she called me to lunch at Bibendum. We did all our standard numbers, culminating in the hallowed dessert routine, by which I ordered one crème brûlée with two spoons and finished the rest of it before she had swallowed her single mouthful. As usual, she had finessed that deadly third glass of wine into me without my even noticing. But there was an extra petit four with the coffee. It was a little red box that opened to reveal a pair of cufflinks: gold ovals enamelled in pink with the chrysanthemum of the Japanese imperial family. "*Domo arigato gozaimashita*," she said. Thank you very much for what you did. "Did I get that right?" Yes, I told her: you got that right.

No, there is not much more. Our last lunch was at Kensington Palace and Harry was present with one of his friends, so there were no cahoots. She was putting distance between us. Later on, quietly and nicely, I was dropped from her list. I understood completely. I had wanted her to be Queen. I had wanted, when I grew old, to see her in the gradually, properly altering beauty of her middle age. I had wanted to see her beside Charles, on the day when he took his proper place as the most intelligent and concerned monarch this country has ever had. I had wanted to have lunch with her once a year and do the dessert routine again. But she wanted life. She was going on to those other, faraway adventures which she knew I didn't believe in. I hoped I would hear about them someday.

No, I never saw her again. Neither will anyone now. Not even once. Never even once again.

No, I can still see her. She's leaving the Caprice, heading for the back door, because a Range Rover full of photographers has just pulled up in the street outside. She's turning her head. She's smiling. Has she forgotten something? Is she coming back?

No. ♦



"On second thought, don't correct me if I'm wrong."

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MANHATTAN CHRONICLES

A WOMAN IN EARNEST

As summer began, Diana spoke of what was on her mind.

BY TINA BROWN

MONDAY, JUNE 23, 1997. The Four Seasons, East Fifty-second Street, between Lexington and Park. At the invitation of Anna Wintour, the editor of *Vogue*, lunch with the Princess of Wales.

Anna and I get there a bit early; the Princess is exactly on time. She wears a mint-green Chanel suit with no blouse and a stunning tan. Making her way quickly across the crowded restaurant, she has the startling phosphorescence of a cartoon creation—too blond, too tall, too painfully recognizable. Perhaps it's her height that's unsettling. It renders her more than just an acute natural beauty. She's like a strange overbred plant, a far-fetched experimental rose.

It is immediately, and surprisingly, easy to talk to her about subjects one might have supposed were off limits. Perhaps her royal armor has begun to fall away, along with the wardrobe that is to be auctioned at Christie's in a week's time. (What remains is something different: celebrity, of the highest wattage.) It's obvious that Anna has the knack of relaxing her. The two worked together on a fashion benefit for breast cancer last September, and have been close since then. Within a few Perrier minutes, we are just a couple of mates having lunch with a famous girlfriend. We talk first about Tony Blair.

"I think at last I will have someone who will know how to *use* me," Diana says. "He's told me he wants me to go on some missions."

"What sort of missions?" I ask.

"I'd really, really like to go to China," she says. "I'm very good at sorting people's heads out." She says this straight-facedly, and I note that, like many stars with a gift for self-projection, she is almost wholly devoid of irony. But in her case the therapized phrases point to a quality of driven earnestness. It's easy to understand how she could throw herself into a public role, and just as easy, sadly, to see why she would bore Prince Charles. Notwithstanding his sometimes thoughtful pronouncements about architecture and urban planning, the county friends he surrounds himself with are a lightweight crowd. They have a collective class unease about anything that smacks of intensity. And what few people have understood is that Diana's love for Charles, like everything else about her, was embarrassingly intense. Had she been a chilly opportunist, she might have accommodated the marital arrangement favored by so many of her husband's friends. But her love was tenacious, desperate, uncompromising. Her temperament was not the sort to take a husband's infidelity in stride. How could Charles have known that the demure deb he married would turn out to harbor a cache of emotions out of Emily Brontë?

None of this, though, is on show in the self-possessed woman who comes to lunch. The Princess that once was—the miserable girl who went mad in her cage—must now seem to her to be from another life, along with the dress she wore to dance with John Travolta at the White House. "I've kept a few things," she says about the auction. "But you know that Catherine Walker with all the bugle beads? People in England don't wear those kind of clothes anymore."

I find myself marvelling at how freely she is willing to talk about members of the Royal Family, and at how shrewd she seems to have become at press relations. She understands that in marketing terms the Windsors are a decaying brand, one that requires repositioning by a media genius—perhaps someone like Peter Mandelson, the political strategist who helped get Tony Blair elected. "I tried again and again to get them to hire someone like him to give them proper advice, but they didn't want to hear it," she says. "They kept saying I was manipulative. But what's the alternative? To just sit there and have them make your image for you? Sometimes editors at newspapers would write editorials suggesting things they could do, but instead of paying attention one of the private secretaries would ring up and give the editors a rocket."

I suggest that the antics of the Duchess of York, a.k.a Fergie, don't help the royal cause.

"No," Diana says. "And it's a shame for Andrew, because he really is the best of the bunch. I mean, people don't know this, but he works really, really hard for the country. He does so much, and no one pays any attention at all. It's the same with Princess Anne. She works like a dog, and nobody cares. And I keep saying to Prince Charles, 'It's no good complaining that people don't care about your work. Until you straighten your head out and get things clear, people just won't give you a break.' "

We talk about her sons, William and Harry. "All my hopes are on William now," she says. "I don't want to push him. Charles suggested he might go to Hong Kong for the handover, but he said, 'Mummy, must I? I just don't feel ready.' I try to din into him all the time about the media—the dangers, and how he must understand and handle it. I think it's too late for the rest of the family. But William—I think he has it. I think he understands. I'm hoping he'll grow up to be as smart about it as John Kennedy, Jr. I want William to be able to handle things as well as John does."

She plainly hankers for America—for the optimism, the options, the openness. She says she would love to move here. It's as if England, for her, had become synonymous with the Palace, that gray stone pile which broke her heart. Anyway, she's grown too big for it. Her kind of fame—wild and close to out of control, the sort of stardom that belongs to Elvis and Marilyn, J.F.K. and Jackie—is truly understandable only in celebrity's homeland. "When all the Americans come in July for Wimbledon, you can feel the energy go up," she says wistfully. "It all collapses again when they leave." She smiles. "Well, perhaps Tony Blair will change all that." She speaks warmly of her friendship with Katharine Graham, the wise matriarch of the Washington *Post*. It's a good sign. Mrs. Graham is exactly the kind of social protector Diana has always lacked—a seasoned older woman who has been through hell herself and is not mired in the politics of English aristocratic circles. "I love her," Diana says. "I really do."

We are about to order coffee, and I ask the Princess if she regrets the loss of her chance to be Queen. I assume she will avoid answering, but she surprises me again. "Yes, yes," she says quickly, her eyes lowered. Then she looks up and continues, "We would have been the best team in the world. I could shake hands till the cows come home. And Charles could make serious speeches. But"—she shakes her head—"it was not to be."

Listening to her, I feel a great sadness for England. She is right: they would have been a great team. The Royal Family had already been marginalized by the time she became Princess; it seems even more so now that she is no longer fully part of it. When was the last time the occupant of Downing Street was more charismatic in the public's mind than the occupants of Buckingham Palace? During the blitz, perhaps, when Churchill was at the noon of his inspirational power. But seldom before, and never since—until now.

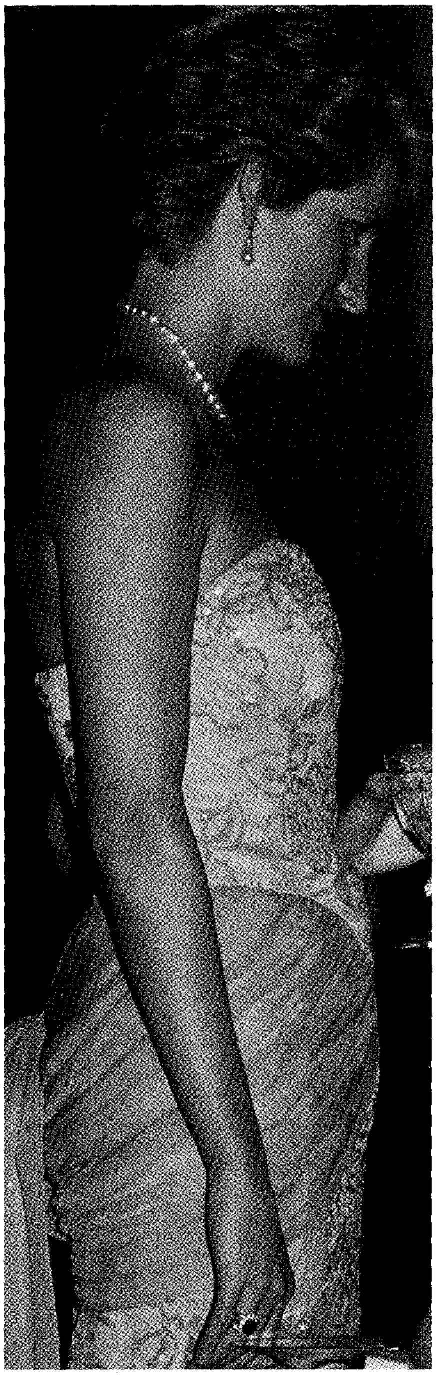
"You see, Charles is not a leader," she says. "He's a follower. He was born to the wrong job. He'd have been so happy with a house in Tuscany, being a host to artists. He just wasn't cut out for what he got."

I ask if one of the problems hasn't been the fact that he has had to stand so long in the wings, waiting for his role to open up.

"It's up to him to *make* his role," she says. "He could do anything. That's what I have tried to do."

I ask about her plans for the summer. For the first time, she looks a little uneasy. August, she says, will be difficult "without the boys," who will spend most of the month at Balmoral with Prince Charles. Still, she adds, now that they attend boarding schools she is getting used to their being away.

She mentions a vexing incident that occurred only the day before: she took her sons to see "The Devil's Own," and there was an instant uproar in the press about the film's being sympathetic to the Irish Republican Army. "I didn't know what it was about when I took them," she says. "We just wanted to see a movie, and we picked it out of the paper because William likes Harrison Ford. I issued a statement straight away, and I called Prince Charles and left a message. I didn't want him to think I was deliberately making trouble." She looks pained as she says this. Her relationship with her ex-husband, one feels, is settling into divorced normalcy—at any rate, she is trying hard to make it do so. She says she especially misses the boys on the weekends Charles has custody of them. What does she do without them? "I stay in town. If I go out, I keep my eyes down or straight ahead. Wherever I go, the press find ways to spy, you know. Often I visit a hospice."


Her presence in Paris in the doldrums of August betokened a season of panic and flight.

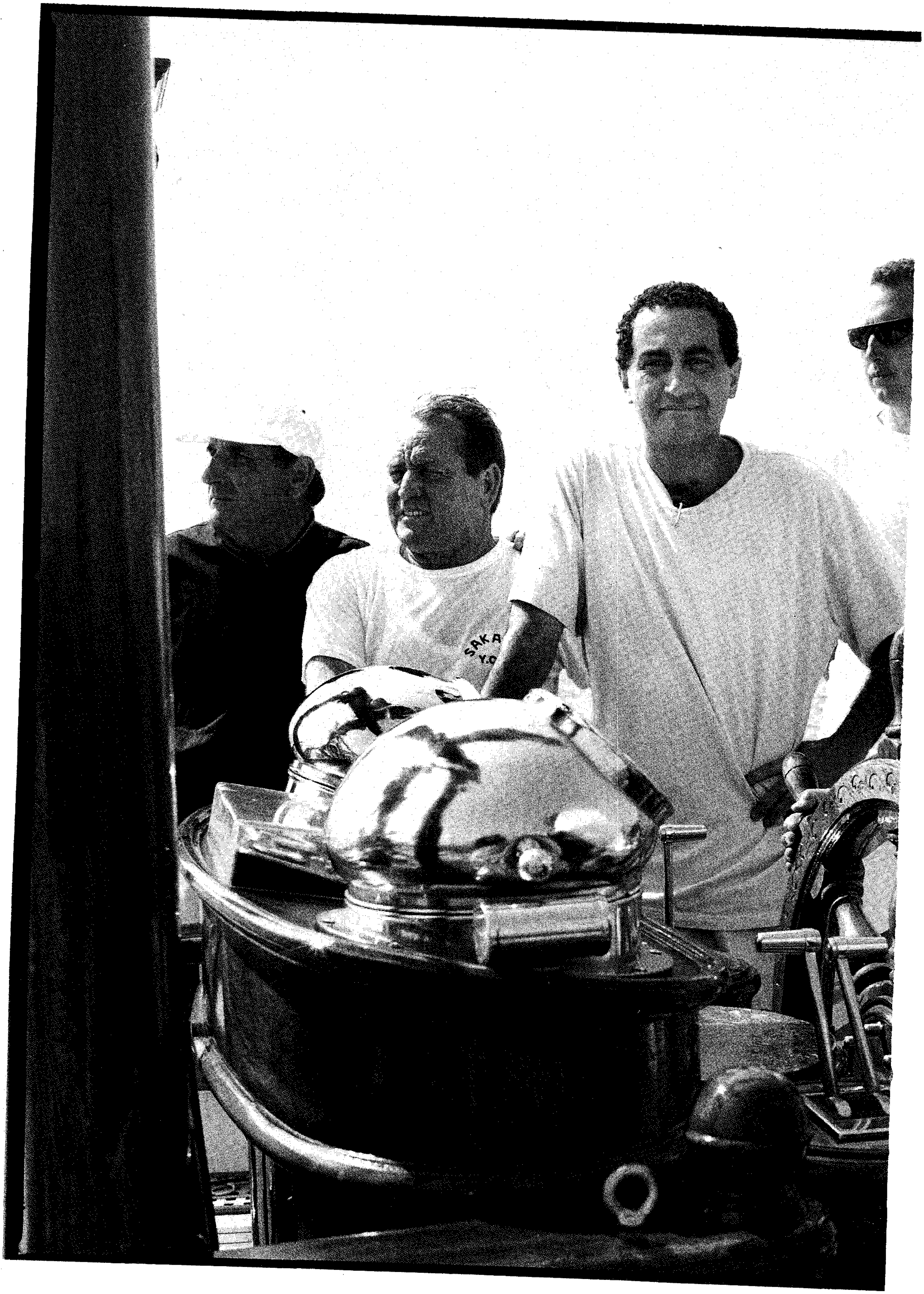
TIM GRAHAM/SYGMA

Again, I feel the churn of strangeness I felt an hour before, when I caught sight of that long-stemmed figure weaving toward us through the restaurant's crowd of C.E.O. suits. After Diana's public revelations of bulimia and self-mutilation, the country-house-party set permanently ceased to be part of her world. Televised confessions, talk of therapy, admissions of pain: it was all so emotionally aggressive, so unseemly—so un-English, in a word. And then, on top of it all, this bleeding-heart stuff! In the idiom of Prince Charles's best friend, the Honorable Nicholas Soames, M.P., "Pass the port, she's not my sort." So, while the rest of her class heads west, taking the M4 to Gloucestershire on a Friday afternoon for a jolly weekend of riding or shooting, the isolated Barbarella princess makes her visits to cancer wards, arriving in a flashing cone of artificial light, like an alien checking out the sorrows of our world.

"Doesn't it drain you, being with dying people so much?" I ask.

"No, never," she answers fervently. "When you discover you can give joy to people like that, there is nothing quite like it. William has begun to understand that, too. And I am hoping it will grow in him." There is a firmness to her voice when she says this, as if she had glimpsed the only thing she can hold fast to. She reminds me of Celia Coplestone, the shallow socialite in T. S. Eliot's "The Cocktail Party," who, devastated by a love that isn't truly reciprocated, surprises everyone in the last act by going off to do humanitarian work in a desolate corner of Africa and becoming a kind of saint. One senses that what began as a public-relations ploy has connected deeply to her fragmented sense of self. She has found a place to channel all that unrequited love, and is learning to be sustained by it.

She describes videotapes of land-mine victims that a friend brought her and says how distraught they made her feel, how determined to help. "That's what I am for," she says. The expression in her eyes as she says this is eerie. Then the mo-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ment passes, and she reverts to being a conventional Sloane Street girl. It had just been announced that next year's G7 conference will be in Birmingham. "Oh, God," she says, giggling. "Couldn't they have thought of somewhere less dreary? Birmingham!"

Before we leave the restaurant, Anna asks her if she would ever marry again. She smiles. "Who would take me on?" she says. "I have so much baggage. Anyone who takes me out to dinner has to accept the fact that their business will be raked over in the papers. Photographers will go through their dustbins. I think I am safer alone." We are out on Fifty-second Street. Two photographers dart forward as she steps into her limo. *Di! Over here! Di! Di!*

WHEN the news came of her death, my first thoughts were of place and time—of the wrongness of any royal princess, even a divorced one, contriving to be in that place at that time. In late summer, the Paris of the rich and the titled simply closes down. The city's grandees retreat north to cool woodlands or south to sunny coasts; meanwhile, Diana's English friends and sisters tramp the Scottish heather with the children or rusticate in the Tuscan villa that Archie and Amanda lend them every year. But Paris in August? Dinner at the Ritz weeks before *la rentrée*? The fact that she was there at all was discordant, a poignant symbol of a season of panic and flight.

What of the brave new Diana I had met at lunch? I found it hard to reconcile the ascendance of Dodi Fayed in her life with the woman who had come to appreciate the subtle guidance of a Katharine Graham. Some have suggested that the Princess was thumbing her nose at the Royal Family by consorting with the scion of a clan that, in its adopted but less than welcoming country, is so redolent of social, if not financial, rejection. I prefer to see it as a relapse—a wounded and wounding gesture, triggered by the galling emergence of Camilla Parker Bowles as the no-longer-unthinkable wife-in-waiting. The frantic Diana lurked beneath the shining surface after all. And, for a woman with so much baggage, at the height of summer, who was there to turn to but a generous boulevardier who had the kit she needed—the planes and the yachts and the money to make it all go away?

The final weeks of Diana's life had hinted at the possibility that she was stumbling down the path blazed by the Duke and Duchess of Windsor (whose very Paris villa had been leased by Dodi Fayed's father and elaborately renovated, as if in preparation for new occupants) or, worse, that she was courting the fate of a displaced Mrs. Trump. If the dalliance had culminated in remarriage—to a partner at least as inappropriate as Wallis Simpson—then one of the consequences would surely have been the end of any connection with the Crown beyond the minimum required by her status as the mother of its heir once removed. A life of luxurious exile, of meaningless wandering from one pleasure spot to the next, would have been the logical sequel. In that event, the only thing that could have redeemed her in life is the thing that has redeemed her in death: her earnest, utterly unironic efforts to ease a bit of human suffering. Now she is frozen into bas-relief, forever kneeling to comfort some hurt.

DIANA'S death, like her life, has left the Royal Family shaken. From the abdication of Edward VIII until the wedding of Charles and Diana, the Windsors had served as the reassuringly dull continuum against which the traditional calendar of English life could be marked. A Christmas speech, a picnic in Scotland, a Remembrance Day wreath, a royal christening: the Windsors' appeal was local, modest, unsurprising. Despite plenty of global travel, they were never global stars. The Mercedes that screeched into the Seine tunnel in Paris carried with it not just a Princess and her playboy but a phenomenon that for sixteen years had frightened the Royal Family, captivated the nation, and enthralled the world.

As the coffin draped with the royal standard emerged slowly from the cargo hold of the plane from Paris, Prince Charles and the Spencer sisters stood silent, watching. The only sound was the soft whirr and click of cameras. What was in the Prince's mind? Along with grief and regret, perhaps this subliminal thought: Can we ever be normal again? ♦

Dodi Fayed and crew, photographed by Helmut Newton. Diana's liaison with him can be seen as a gesture both wounded and wounding.

SYGMA

A CRITIC AT LARGE

THE PROBLEM PRINCESS

Diana's style and independence reinvigorated the image of a fading family, but she wasn't the first Princess to discover that eclipsing the royal in-laws is unforgivable.

BY SIMON SCHAMA

For God's sake let us sit upon the ground
And tell sad stories of the death of kings.
—*William Shakespeare, "Richard II."*

1981

IT was the wedding of the past and the future: the Radetzky March meets the *Tatler* cover girl—just what the disunited United Kingdom needed. But, as it turned out, the past and the future couldn't get along. And between them the present got lost.

1533-1536

ONCE upon a time, many hundreds of years ago, in a kingdom by the sea, there lived the fair daughter of a country gentleman. She took the fancy of a mighty and impatient ruler, became his bride, and promptly bore him a daughter. But after only a little while her husband, the King, became vexed by her silvery lightness of spirit and her failure to produce a son. Her enemies claimed that she was enamored more of her own self than of her liege lord, and was careless with her tongue, and even, some whispered, with her favors. A thousand days after her nuptials, she was brought before her peers and accused of treason for plotting the King's death and for sharing her bed with five lovers, including her brother and a court musician. Her persecutors implied that she was a skilled sorceress, accomplished in the dark arts. As a commoner, the musician was hanged; her brother and the other gentlemen of the privy chamber were beheaded. Two days later, the disposable Queen was herself sent to the block, and on the following day King Henry VIII was betrothed to his next wife, who died shortly after bearing him a son.

DIANA SPENCER was no Anne Boleyn, and her end was tragically accidental, not malevolently designed. But her sad fate belongs to the history of a monarchy littered with carnage and carnality. She was consciously selected for the purposes of dynastic reinvigoration, but the tonic proved too heady for the ancient body of the monarchy. It thrashed around with increasing desperation, seeking ways to subdue the feistiness of the elixir, or else to get it out of its system altogether.

This had happened before, and not just to Henry VIII. In the twelfth century, Henry II's marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine made him the master of an enormous empire, which included most of western France along with England. But his consort was independent-minded as well as independently wealthy. She had been married before, as a teen-ager, to Louis VII of France, and had gone crusading with him in the Holy Land, where rumors spread that she had committed adultery. The marriage had been annulled, but by the time Eleanor became Queen of the Anglo-Angevin Empire she had evidently learned something about the cruelty of princes, for she made no secret of her anger at Henry II's infidelities. A bitter estrangement ensued, with King and Queen locked in a battle for the loyalty of their sons. Suspicious that Eleanor had backed them in a revolt against him, Henry had his Queen confined. But she prevailed, outlasting her husband and living to see her favorite son, John, become king.

At the end of the eighteenth century, Princess Caroline of Brunswick, chosen by George III for his son, the Prince of Wales, was repudiated by her husband after bearing him a daughter. (The Prince had had a prior, illegal marriage to a Catholic commoner, Maria Fitzherbert.) To his dismay, Princess Caroline refused to disappear; instead, she conducted her own court and her own romances, becoming steadily more popular than the heir to the throne. Her trial before the House of Lords for adultery—essentially an attempt to rob her of her title—turned into a public-relations calamity, with vast, riotous crowds applauding Caroline and jeering at her husband.

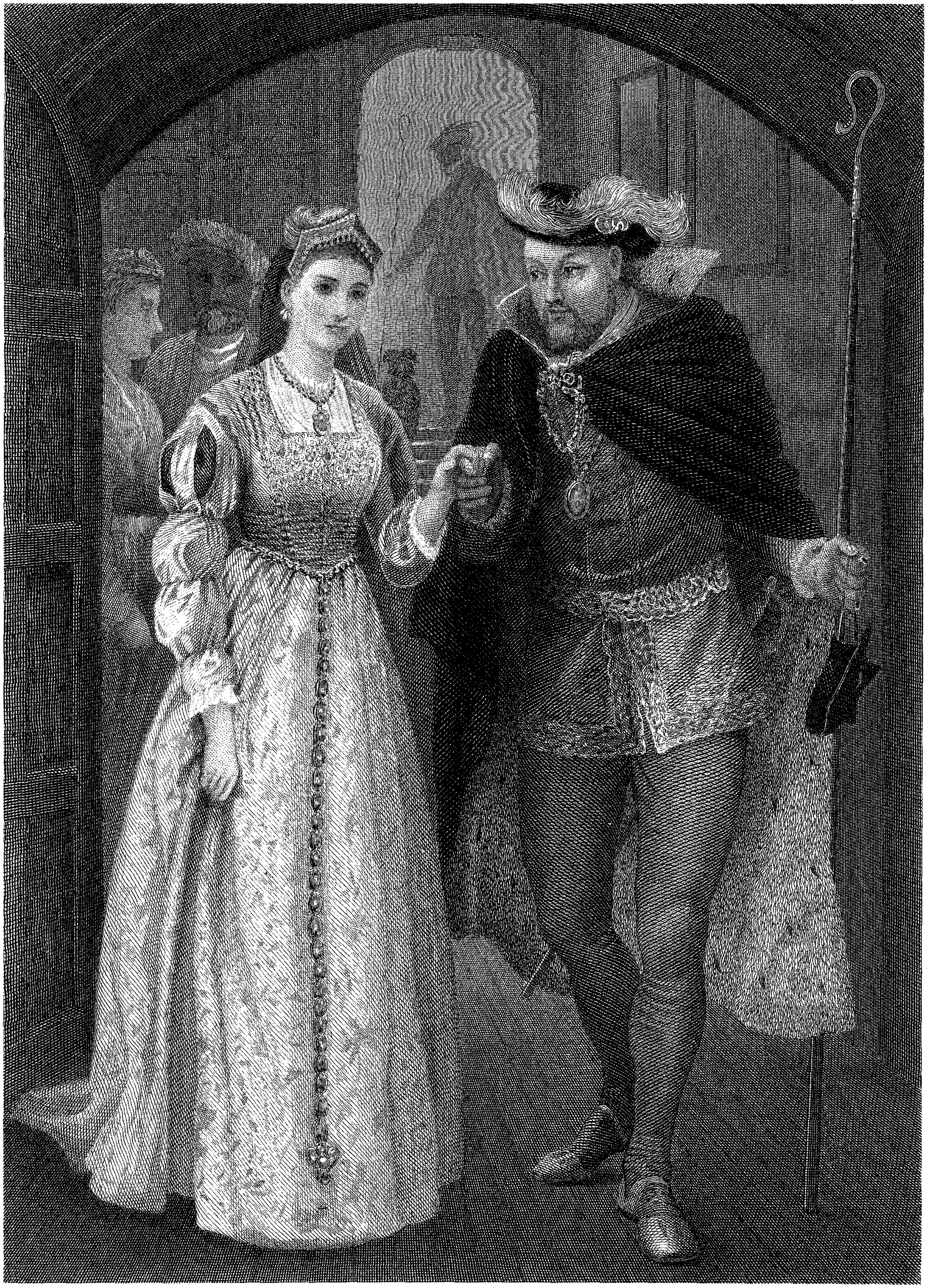
Diana surely knew of these redoubtable predecessors. In a recent television interview, she made it plain that she saw herself as part of a tradition of "strong women" destined to make the establishment lose sleep at night for fear of what they might do next. It was, after all, her spirited embrace of modernity that had made her useful to the guardians of propriety. Now they would have to live with it.

1961

REMEMBER, both Diana and Dodi were babies of Suez, an event as traumatic for Britain as Vietnam was for America. Dodi was born into the Egypt of Naguib and Nasser, a country that had just deposed the playboy King Farouk. Diana was born into a Britain still licking its wounds from the worst fiasco of its imperial disintegration. In 1956, an Anglo-French military force, the rotten fruit of a secret alliance, had pretended to "interpose" itself between embattled Egyptian and Israeli troops but had been forced into ignominious withdrawal after the United States made it clear that it was displeased with the gambit. The debacle disgraced the British Prime Minister, Anthony Eden, and left the country writhing in fury and humiliation, and with a long-term Egypt complex.

In 1961, when Diana was born, on the Queen's private estate of Sandringham, the strength of national tradition was still the balm for impotence. Superannuated brigadiers in Cotswolds pubs consoled themselves with the truism that if the Yanks had the power the Brits still had the glory. Elizabeth II's annual Christmas message, transmitted to the Commonwealth after British digestions had dealt with the plum pudding, was treated as an oracle from the Palace—the royal equivalent of a papal pax vobiscum. The London *Times* still had nothing on its front page but dignified small advertisements and announcements; the Tory Prime Minister was the re-

CULVER PICTURES



The Princess was no Anne Boleyn (above, with Henry VIII), but her sad fate belongs to the history of a monarchy of carnage and carnality.

assuringly avuncular and squirearchical figure of Harold Macmillan; the noontime entertainment on the radio was called, without a trace of irony, "Workers' Playtime"; and the annual cricket match between amateur and professional cricketers at Lord's was called Gentlemen vs. Players. "Coming out" was for débutantes, not gays, and it meant being presented to the Queen. Each year, troops of double-barrelled Henriettas and Lucindas dutifully followed the rituals of the Season, donning Wellies at the point-to-point or straw hats and ribbons on the towpath—doing whatever it took to find the perfect Nigel or, at the very least, notch up a mention in "Jennifer's Diary," the society column of the magazine *Queen* and the unofficial archive of the ruling class.

THE LAST TOAST

(For Anna Akhmatova)

I drink to the narrow window a face peers through
  at 4 A.M.,
to the little side road that leads to grief,
to the ones bullied to death, to the bullies,
to the warm logic of the unknown,
to the tall gates, the master's wide, wide
gates, nonexistent and latched forever.

—Angela Ball

Diana might have followed this well-trotted trail from the Badminton Horse Trials to the Henley Regatta, but she didn't. Somewhere, beyond the clotted cream and the Hooray Henries, there was another Britain—a Britain that was sick of being divided into country-house masters and comical Cockneys. The sex scandals that mired the last days of the Macmillan government and the transfer of power from the Prime Minister's hospital bed to his designated successor, the fourteenth Earl of Home, only confirmed this Other England in its gathering contempt for tradition. It was fidgeting around in its chrysalis, and when it finally broke free of the drab casing it went in for a cultural makeover the likes of which had not been seen since the Edwardians. It was rowdy, inventively insolent, street-smart, and genuinely democratic. In Lindsay Anderson's insurrectionary fantasy "If," it had already machine-gunned the public-school establishment. And now it was waiting for Diana—not that the little girl from the broken aristocratic household and the Swiss finishing school knew a thing about it.

1981

By the time she came along, kitted out in the standard Sloane uniform, her large eyes running for cover beneath her bangs, it was too late. The Beatles had come and gone. England's finest hour—the beating of Germany in World Cup soccer, in 1966—was a distant memory. Labour Party governments that had tried to mantle themselves in the gaudy colors of swinging London found that they were themselves swinging from the rope of the ailing British economy. Promises to stand firm by the value of the pound sterling were followed repeatedly by devaluation, for which international bankers, a.k.a. "the gnomes of Zurich," were blamed. Grim winters of strikes produced electricity blackouts, turning Yuletide cheer into bitter darkness. The "pinko-gray" race, as E. M. Forster called the masters of the British Empire, found itself confronted by an Indo-Caribbean immigrant generation that had the cheek to answer back.

Into this dismal picture strode, "like a colossus" (as she would be the first to say), the phenomenal person of Margaret Thatcher. Attempting to understand Princess Diana's appeal without taking that Prime Minister into account is like assuming that Glinda ruled the Land of Oz uncontested. For, by the time Charles Philip Arthur George and Diana Frances stepped out of the nave of St. Paul's Cathedral into the sunlight and the cheers of millions, it was Margaret Thatcher who had annexed the idea of a revolutionized "new" Britain within her steely grip. This was to be a Britain in which the worst thing was not, as Diana would later say, "to feel unloved" but to be unproductive. Accordingly, the British welfare system was brutally deconstructed; its dependent charges were given a strong dose of salts that looked suspiciously like mass unemployment and were told in no uncertain terms to stand on their own two feet. Thatcher and her supply-side myrmidons danced on the grave of the "nanny state."

But Diana had *been* a nanny (as well as a kindergarten teacher), and had seen nothing wrong with what she often called T.L.C. After her marriage, she very rapidly became the antithesis not only of her husband and the well-starched custodians of royal correctness but of the Prime Minister. It was not simply that Britons chose between the firm and the gentle hand; it was rather that they craved both the spankings and the smiles, and in no particular order. When Maggie barked and commanded, the country stood at attention; when Di smiled that smile, the same country melted in a warm puddle of adoration. Both women were necessary for the rebuilding of national confidence. Maggie's warships recapturing the Falklands was a poke in the eye to all those who had for decades jeered at Britain as the sick man of Europe. Diana's jaw-dropping allure gave the lie to the hoary gibe that where other nations had sex Britain had hot-water bottles. She was the bare-shouldered beauty, but she was also Peter Pan's Wendy, ministering to an entire nation of Lost Boys.

Indeed, Diana's physical outwardness was both the triumph and the trouble. The Princess touched people, and not just metaphorically. When she laid her hands on the sick, and especially on victims of AIDS, she was, perhaps without knowing it, tapping one of the most ancient rituals of royal magic: thaumaturgy, or touching for the king's evil. Medieval kings, at their coronation (and on each subsequent anniversary), would extend their hands to those suffering from the disfiguring disease of scrofula. It was believed that through their divine appointment they were able to absorb the evil of the disease into their own bodies and exorcise it. This was the emblematic miracle of monarchy, distantly related to the Gospel of Jesus washing the feet of the poor. More than any of the Palace Windsors, Diana seemed to understand the incredible potency of the common touch.

But, of course, it was for the Prince to exercise thaumaturgy, not his wife. Increasingly, the Royal Family found itself struggling to preserve the mysteries of its authority against a rogue member who seemed to believe in the healing power of familiarity, and who gradually came to seek out rather than flinch from the flashbulbs. But even as Diana was becoming an adept at healing the wounds of the British body politic she was secretly doing hurt to her own. As her husband seemed, bafflingly, to reject her company, she turned gratefully to the embraces of her children and the British people, and returned those embraces with genuine spontaneity and warmth.

Which is not to say, as the unofficial obsequies are already doing, that Diana was a saint. On the contrary, the power of her appeal was precisely the vulnerable fallibility that became increasingly visible as the wide eyes got still wider in the bulimically shrunken cheeks. To the morning coats in the Palace, Diana the Martyr was an even bigger nightmare than Diana the Pop Idol. Hence the desperate tactic of Prince Charles's making an end run around his wife's mastery of the media and giving the notorious interview that effectively ended the experiment begun in St. Paul's Cathedral. Diana's response was to out-confess her husband in a telegenic performance of stunningly well-coached artlessness, leaving no cliché of the self-esteem movement undeployed. And the great British public, which back in Harold Macmillan's tweedy age would have averted its eyes in the presence of psychological damage, now Felt Her Pain.

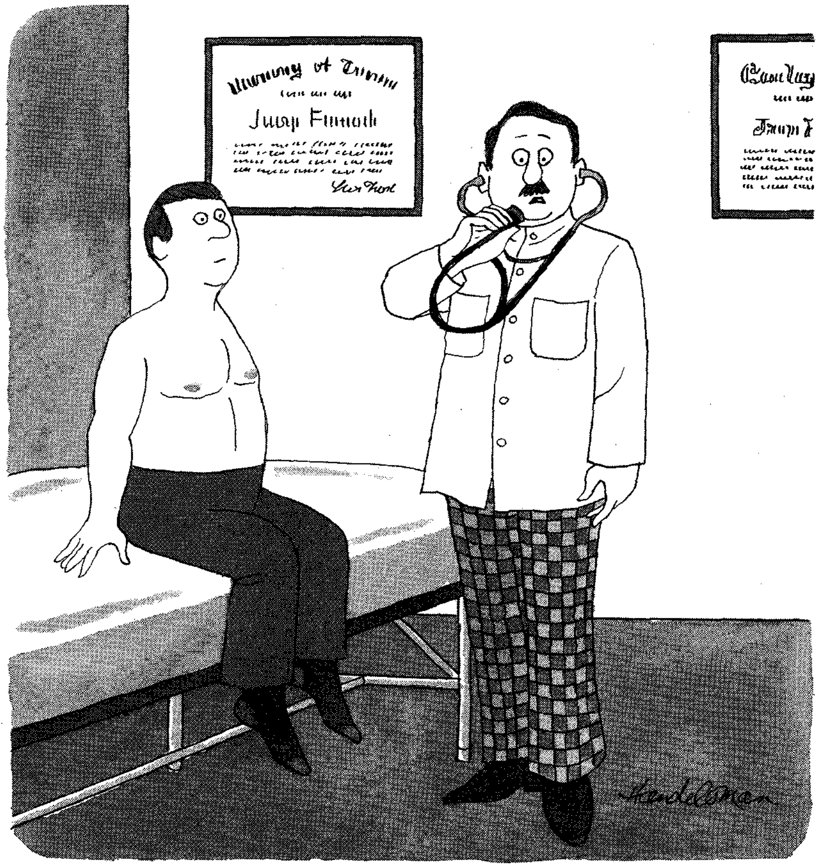
The mortification registered by the guardians of the Palace may have been a little disingenuous, seeing as they had (presumably) allowed the Prince to have his say, but Diana herself may have been just a little confused about what she had really wanted from all the exercises in truth therapy. For the rest of her brutally interrupted life, she seemed both to demand and to expect maximum personal freedom, along with continued public prominence. Her determination "not to fade away" was in many respects admirable, but in the torrent of vilification currently raining down on the subhuman paparazzi it ought not to be forgotten that Diana did want both privacy and publicity, and the power to control which had the upper hand and when.

1997

IN her last months, Diana seems to have understood—perhaps even welcomed the fact—that the role she was inventing for herself had no precedent in British tradition or public life. It's not hard to imagine the upper lips of those in the royal circle stiffening to the point of rictus as they contemplated the establishment of an alternative court, funded by their own divorce settlement, attended by global contingents of Beautiful People, and exerting a bewitching spell on the growing princes. Anne Boleyn was sent to the axe for much less.

In the end, though, there was a contradiction (which turned out to be monstrously fatal) in Diana's sense of her plans for herself. For she badly wanted to be both Diana National and Diana International. The fallout from this was apparent in the notorious interview with *Le Monde*, in which she said that if it were not for the boys any sane person would already have fled the sceptred isle. And her choice of lover was destined, in the long run, to make her adoring British public become disenchanted. For the ghosts of Suez have not all gone away. Though the treatment of the senior Al Fayed at the hands of the British naturalization authorities was evidently not cricket, Diana's alliance with the family that bought Harrods, the retailing world's equivalent of St. Paul's Cathedral, and then leased the Paris mansion of the despised, exiled Duke of Windsor would finally have been seen as an act of willful de-patriation.

It's not a problem that she or Britain will have to face. She was certainly more sinned against than sinning, and there is nothing in the book of misdemeanours that a funeral in Westminster Abbey, the mausoleum of Kings, will not wipe clean from public memory. Normally, the great diapason of British ceremony could be relied on to rise, swell, and cover her astonishing, tragic history. But the argument between tradition and modernity that Diana was recruited to settle threatens to follow her noisily beyond the grave. There is a chance that for the first time since the death of Victoria the well-oiled machinery of the monarchy may actually stall on the phenomenon of the populist Princess. And there is the absolute certainty that as the last anthems are sung the paparazzi will begin to focus their long-distance lenses on the already ominously good-looking features of William the Fair.♦



"Please, honey, I'm with a patient, and I've asked you not to call me on this line."

CAMERA PRESS

The Royal Family in 1985, photographed by Snowdon. Increasingly, the family struggled to preserve the myst

its authority against the rogue Princess, who came to seek out rather than flinch from the flashbulbs.

REFLECTIONS

CRASH

Was the fatal accident a cocktail of death and desire?

BY SALMAN RUSHDIE

IT has all been so disturbingly novelistic, and the novel I'm thinking of isn't a fairy tale, although Diana's story did begin like a fairy tale, nor is it a soap opera, although goodness knows the long saga of the battling Windsors has been sudsy enough. I'm thinking of J. G. Ballard's "Crash," whose recent film adaptation, by David Cronenberg, caused howls from the censorship lobby, particularly in Britain. It is one of the darker ironies of a dark event that the themes and ideas explored by Ballard and Cronenberg, themes and ideas that many in Britain have called pornographic, should have been lethally acted out in the car accident that killed Diana, Princess of Wales, Dodi Fayed, and their drunken driver.

We live in a culture that routinely eroticizes and glamorizes its consumer technology, notably the motorcar. We also live in the Age of Fame, in which the intensity of our gaze upon celebrity turns the famous into commodities, too—a transformation that has often proved powerful enough to destroy them. Ballard's novel, by bringing together these two erotic fetishes—the Automobile and the Star—in an act of sexual violence (a car crash), created an effect so shocking as to be thought obscene.

The death of Diana is just such an obscenity. One of the reasons it is so very sad is that it seems so senseless. To die because you don't want to have your picture taken! What could be more absurd? But in fact this frightful accident is freighted with meaning. It tells us uncomfortable truths about what we have become.

In our erotic imagination, perhaps only the camera can rival the automobile. The camera, as a reporter, captures the news and delivers it to our door, and, in more adoring mode, often looks upon beautiful women and offers them up for our delight. In Diana's fatal crash, the Camera (as both Reporter and Lover) is joined to the Automobile and the Star, and the cocktail of death and desire becomes even more powerful than the one in Ballard's book.

Think of it this way. The object of desire, the Beauty, the Blonde (Diana), is repeatedly subjected to the unwelcome attentions of a persistent suitor (the Camera) until the dashing, glamorous knight (riding his Automobile) sweeps her away. The Camera, with its unavoidably phallic long-lensed snout, gives pursuit. And the story reaches its tragic climax, for the Automobile is driven not by a hero but by a clumsy drunk. Put not your trust in fairy tales or chivalrous knights. The object of desire, in the moment of her death, sees the phallic lenses advancing upon her, snapping, snapping. Think of it this way, and the pornography of Diana Spencer's death becomes apparent. She died in a sublimated sexual assault.

Sublimated. That's the point. The Camera is not, finally, a suitor in its own right. True, it seeks to possess the Beauty, to capture her on film, for economic gain. But that's a euphemism. The brutal truth is that the camera is acting on our behalf. If the camera acts voyeuristically, it is because our relationship with the Beauty has always been voyeuristic. If blood is on the hands of the photographers and the photo agencies and the news media's photo editors, it is also on ours. What newspapers do you read? When you saw the pictures of Dodi and Diana cavorting together, did you say that's none of my business, and turn the page?

We are the lethal voyeurs. "Are you satisfied now?" people in Britain have been shouting at photographers. Could we answer the same question? Are we satisfied now? Are we going to stop being fascinated by those illicit images of Diana's kiss or by the earlier "sensational scoops" of Prince Charles naked in a distant room, of Fergie getting her toes sucked—all those purloined moments, those stolen secrets of public people's private lives that have, for more than a decade now, been the stuff of our most popular newspapers and magazines? Will we no longer want to eavesdrop on the intimacies of those—like the voluptuous Earthling movie star in a Vonnegut novel, imprisoned with a man in a zoo on the planet Tralfamadore so that the locals could study her mating habits—we imprison in fame?

Not a chance.

DIANA, PRINCESS OF WALES, became skillful at constructing the images of herself that she wanted people to see. I recall a British newspaper editor's telling me how Diana composed the famous shot in which she sat, alone and lovelorn, in front of the world's greatest monument to love, the Taj Mahal. She knew, he said, exactly how the public would "read" this photograph. It would bring her great sympathy, and make people think (even) less well of the Prince of Wales than before. Diana was not given to using words like "semiotics," but she was a capable semiotician of herself. With increasing confidence, she gave us the signs by which we might know her as she wished to be known.

Some have been saying that her "collusion" with the media in general, and with photographers in particular, must be an important mitigating factor in any discussion of the paparazzi's role in her death. Perhaps so; but one must also consider the importance a woman in her position atttaches to controlling her public image. The public figure is happy to be photographed only when she or he is prepared for it, "on guard," one might say. The paparazzo looks only for the unguarded moment. The battle is for control; for a form of power.

She did not wish to give the photographers power over her—to be merely their (our) Object. In escaping from the pursuing lenses, she was asserting her determination, perhaps her right, to be something altogether more dignified: that is, to be a Subject. Fleeing from Object to Subject, from commodity toward humanity, she met her death. Wanting to be the mistress of her own life, she surrendered herself to a driver who was not even able to control the car. This, too, is a bitter irony.

The Windsors and the Al Fayeds are the archetypal Insiders and Outsiders. Mohamed Al Fayed, the Egyptian who longed to be British, bought Harrods (and Conservative M.P.s) in his failed quest for British citizenship and membership in an establishment that closed its doors against him. Diana's love for Dodi Fayed may have felt to Dodi's father like a moment of sweet triumph over that establishment. Diana alive was the ultimate trophy. In death, she may unmake Al Fayed. He has tragically lost his eldest son; perhaps he has also lost his best, last chance of being accepted by the Britain he loves.

I described the Windsors as the archetypal Insiders, but at this moment their status is also in doubt. Once beloved of the nation, they are now widely seen as the family that maltreated the far more beloved Diana. If Mr. Al Fayed is fated to remain on the outside looking in, then the Royal Family itself, very much on the inside, may just possibly be on the way out. The nation's love of Diana will undoubtedly transfer itself to her sons. But the British people may come to feel that these boys would be better off away from the crippling burdens of being royal.

For behind all the veils of illusion, all the making and breaking of images, all the obsession with flimflam, all the sanctimonious piffle that bedevils our public life, there is the simple fact of three dead people, one of them a good mother who tried to show her boys something of what the real world was like. She took them to fun fairs and burger joints, but she also took them to soup kitchens and clinics for the terminally ill. If we can collectively accept that our insatiable, voyeuristic appetite for the iconic Diana was ultimately responsible for her death, then perhaps we may now be able to ask ourselves more sober questions about her two sons. How can they go on living in the real world she tried to show them, the world beyond the closed society of the British aristocracy, beyond Eton College? Who will take them to Harrison Ford movies and AIDS hospices? How might they, one day, be happy again?

Diana herself seemed far happier once she'd escaped from the Royal Family. Perhaps Britain itself would be happier if it made the same escape, and learned to live without kings and queens. Such are the unthinkable thoughts that have become all too thinkable now. ♦

The object of desire, in the moment of her death, sees the phallic lenses advancing upon her, snapping, snapping.

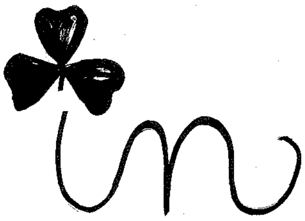
SUU-HOUNSFIELD/SIPA PRESS

FICTION

THE MOURNING

Why are the Irish so predictably unwelcome in London?

BY WILLIAM TREVOR



In the town, on the gray estate on the Dunmanway road, they lived in a corner house. They always had. Mrs. Brogan had borne and brought up six children there. Brogan, a council laborer, still grew vegetables and a few marigolds in its small back garden. Only Liam Pat was still at home with them, at twenty-three the youngest in the family, working for O'Dwyer the builder. His mother—his father, too, though in a different way—was upset when Liam Pat said he was thinking of moving further afield. "Cork?" his mother asked. But it was England Liam Pat had in mind.

He didn't have wild ambitions; but he wanted to make what he could of himself. At the Christian Brothers' he'd been the tidiest in the class. He'd been attentive, even though he often didn't understand. "Ah, sure, you'll pick it up," O'Dwyer said when Liam Pat asked him if he could learn a trade. He'd pick up the whole lot—plumbing, bricklaying, carpentry, housepainting. He'd have them all at his fingertips. Privately, O'Dwyer's opinion was that Liam Pat didn't have enough upstairs to master any trade and when it came down to it what was wrong with operating the mixer? "Keep the big mixer turning and keep Liam Pat Brogan behind it" was one of O'Dwyer's good-humored catchphrases on the sites where his men built houses for him.

It was Dessie Coglan who said he could get Liam Pat fixed in England. He'd go himself, Dessie Coglan said, if he didn't have the wife and another kid expected. No way Rosita would stir, no way she'd move five yards from the estate, with her mother two doors down. "You'll fall on your feet there all right," Dessie Coglan confidently predicted. "No way you won't." Stay with O'Dwyer and he'd be shovelling wet cement for the balance of his days.

Dessie was on the estate also. He had married into it, getting a house when the second child was born. Dessie had had big ideas at the Brothers'; with a drink or two in him he had them still. There was his talk of "the lads" and of "connections" with the extreme republican movement, his promotion of himself as a fixer. By trade he was a plasterer.

"Give that man a phone as soon as you're there," he instructed Liam Pat, and Liam Pat wrote the number down. He had always admired Dessie, the easy way he had with Rosita Drudy before he married her, the way he seemed to know how a hurling match would go even though he had never handled a hurley stick himself, the way he could talk through the cigarette he was smoking, his voice becoming so low you couldn't hear what he was saying, his eyes narrowed to lend weight to the confidential nature of what he passed on. A few people said Dessie Coglan was all mouth, but Liam Pat disagreed.

"It's not bad at all," Liam Pat wrote on a postcard to his parents when he'd been in London a week. The man known to Dessie Coglan had got him work. "There's a Mr. Huxter on the lookout for young fellows," the man, called Feeny, said when Liam Pat phoned him. "The wage is twice what O'Dwyer gave," he squeezed in at the bottom of the postcard, which had a picture of a Guardsman in a sentry box on it.

After that, every four weeks or so Liam Pat telephoned home on a Saturday evening. What he talked about was a job finished or a new one begun, how he waited every morning to be picked up by the white Nissan van, to be driven halfway across London from the area where he had a room. He didn't reveal that he was lonely, or that when he'd asked Huxter about learning a trade the foreman had said take what was on offer or leave it, a general laborer was what was needed, filling in foundations. A big, black-mustached man, Huxter worked as hard as any of the men under him, stripping himself to his vest, a brass buckle on the belt that held his trousers up. What Liam Pat didn't reveal, either, was that from the first morning in the gang Huxter had taken against him, staring at him as if in some way his freckled features were offensive. "What kind of a thing's that?" Huxter said when Liam Pat told him his name, and called him Mick instead. "Oh, very Irish," he would say, even when Liam Pat did something sensible, such as putting planks down in the mud to wheel the barrows on.

When Liam Pat had been working with Huxter for six weeks, the man called Feeny got in touch again, on the phone one Sunday. "How're you doing?" Feeny inquired. "Are you settled, boy?"

Liam Pat said he was, and a few days later, when he was with two other Irish boys from the gang, standing up at the bar in a public house called the Spurs and Horse, Feeny arrived in person.

"How're you doing?" Feeny said, introducing himself.

He was a wizened-featured man with black hair in a widow's peak. He had a clerical look about him, but he wasn't a priest, as he soon made clear: he worked in a glass factory, he said.

He shook hands with all three of them, with Rafferty and Noonan as warmly as with Liam Pat. He bought them drinks, refusing to let them pay for his, saying he couldn't allow young fellows. A bit of companionship was all he was after, he said. "Doesn't it keep the poor exile going?"

There was general agreement with this sentiment. There were some who came over, Feeny said, who stayed no longer than a few days. "Missing the mam," he said, his thin lips drawn briefly back to allow a laugh that Rafferty remarked afterward reminded him of the bark of a dog. "A young fellow one time didn't step out of the train," Feeny said.

After that, Feeny often looked in at the Spurs and Horse. In subsequent conversations, asking questions and showing an interest, he learned that Huxter was picking on Liam Pat. He didn't know Huxter

FILIP PAGOWSKI

personally, he said, but both Rafferty and Noonan assured him that Liam Pat had cause for more complaint than he admitted to, that when Huxter got going he was no bloody joke. Feeny sympathized, tightening his mouth in a way he had, wagging his head in disgust. It was then that he began to make a particular friend of Liam Pat.

He took him to greyhound tracks; he found him a better place to live; he lent him money when Liam Pat was short once, and didn't press for repayment. As further weeks went by, everything would have been all right, as far as Liam Pat was concerned, if it hadn't been for Huxter. "Ah, no, I'm grand," he continued to protest when he made his Saturday telephone call home, still not mentioning the difficulty he was experiencing with the foreman. But it had several times crossed his mind that one Monday morning he wouldn't be there waiting for the van to pick him up, that he'd had enough.

"What would you do, though, Liam Pat?" Feeny asked in Bob's Dining Rooms, where on weekends he and Liam Pat often met for a meal.

"Go home."

Feeny nodded; then he sighed and after a pause said it could come to that. He'd seen it before, a bullying foreman with a down on a young fellow he'd specially pick out.

"It's got so's I hate him."

Again Feeny allowed a silence to develop. Then he said, "They look down on us."

"How d'you mean?"

"Any man with an Irish accent. The way things are."

"You mean bombs and stuff?"

"I mean, you're breathing their air and they'd charge you for it." Feeny leaned forward, over a plate of liver and potatoes. He lowered his voice to a whisper. "They wash the ware twice after us. Plates, cups, a glass you'd take a drink out of. I was in a launderette one time and I offered a woman the machine after I'd done with it. 'No, thanks,' she said soon's I opened my mouth."

Liam Pat had never had such an experience, but people weren't friendly. It was all right in the gang; it was all right when he went out with Rafferty and Noonan, or with Feeny. But people didn't smile, they didn't nod or say something when they saw you coming. In the place Feeny had found for him, a man who didn't live there, whose name he didn't know, came round every Sunday morning and you paid him and he wrote out a slip. He never said anything, and Liam Pat used to wonder if he had some difficulty with speech. Although there was other people's food in the kitchen, and although there were footsteps on the stairs and sometimes overhead, in the weeks Liam Pat had lived there he never saw any of the other tenants, or heard voices. The curtains of one of the downstairs rooms were always drawn over, which you could see from the outside and which added to the dead feeling of the house.

"It's the same the entire time," Feeny said. "Stupid as pigs. Can they write their names? You can see them thinking it."

Huxter would say it straight out. "Get your guts put into it," Huxter shouted at Liam Pat, and once when something wasn't done to his liking he said there were more brains in an Irish turnip. "Tow that bloody island out into the sea," he said another time. A drop of their own medicine, he said.

"I couldn't get you shifted," Feeny said. "If I could I would."

"Another gang, like?"

"Maybe in a couple of weeks there'd be something."

"It'd be great, another gang."

"Did you ever know McTighe?"

Liam Pat shook his head. He said Feeny had asked him that before. Did McTighe run a gang, he asked.

"He's in with a bookie. It'd be a good thing if you knew McTighe. Good all round, Liam Pat."

TEN days later, when Liam Pat was drinking with Rafferty and Noonan in the Spurs and Horse, Feeny joined them and afterward walked away from the public house with Liam Pat.

"Will we have one for the night?" he suggested, surprising Liam Pat, because they'd come away when closing time was called and it would be the same anywhere else. "No problem," Feeny said, disposing at once of this objection.

"I have to get the last bus out, though. Ten minutes it's due."

"You can doss where we're going. No problem at all, boy."

He wondered if Feeny was drunk. He'd best get back to his bed, he insisted, but Feeny didn't appear to hear him. They turned in to a side street. They went round to the back of a house. Feeny knocked gently on a windowpane and the rattle of television voices ceased almost immediately. The back door of the house opened.

"Here's Liam Pat Brogan," Feeny said.

A bulky middle-aged man, with coarse fair hair above stolid reddish features, stood in the rectangle of light. He wore a black jersey and trousers.

"The hard man," he greeted Liam Pat, proffering a hand with a cut healing along the edge of the thumb.

"Mr. McTighe," Feeny completed his introduction. "We were passing."

Mr. McTighe led the way into a kitchen. He snapped open two cans of beer and handed one to each of his guests. He picked up a third from the top of a refrigerator. Carling it was, Black Label.

"How're you doing, Liam Pat?" Mr. McTighe asked.

Liam Pat said he was all right, but Feeny softly denied that.

More of the same, he reported: a foreman giving an Irish lad a hard time. Mr. McTighe made a sympathetic motion with his large, square head. He had a hoarse voice that seemed to come from the depths of his chest. A Belfast man, Liam Pat said to himself when he got used to the accent, a city man.

"Is the room O.K.?" Mr. McTighe asked, a query that came as a surprise. "Are you settled?"

Liam Pat said his room was all right, and Feeny said, "It was Mr. McTighe fixed that for you."

"The room?"

"He did of course."

"It's a house that's known to me," Mr. McTighe said, and did not elucidate further. He gave a racing tip—Cassandra's Friend at Newton Abbot, the first race.

"Put your shirt on that, Liam Pat," Feeny advised, and laughed. They stayed no more than half an hour, leaving the kitchen as they had entered it, by the door to the back yard. On the street Feeny said, "You're in good hands with Mr. McTighe."

Liam Pat didn't understand that, but didn't say so. It would have something to do with the racing tip, he said to himself. He asked who the man who came round on Sunday mornings for the rent was.

"I wouldn't know that, boy."

"I think I'm the only lodger there at the moment. There's a few shifted out, I'd say."

"It's quiet for you so."

"It's quiet all right."

Liam Pat had to walk back to the house that night; there'd been no question of dossing down in Mr. McTighe's. It took him nearly two hours, but the night was fine and he didn't mind. He went over the conversation that had taken place, recalling Mr. McTighe's concern for his well-being, still bewildered by it. He slept soundly when he lay down, not bothering to take off his clothes, it being so late.

WEEKS went by, during which Liam Pat didn't see Feeny. One of the other rooms in the house where he lodged was occupied again, but only for a weekend, and then he seemed once more to be on his own. One Friday Huxter gave Rafferty and Noonan their cards, accusing them of skiving. "Stay if you want to," he said to Liam Pat, and Liam Pat was aware that the foreman didn't want him to go, that he served a purpose as Huxter's butt. But without his friends he was lonely, and a bitter resentment continuously nagged him, spreading from the foreman's treatment of him.

"I think I'll go back," he said the next time he ran into Feeny, outside the Spurs and Horse one night. At first he'd thought Feeny was touchy when he went on about his experience in a launderette or plates being washed twice; now he felt it could be true. You'd buy a packet of cigarettes off the same woman in a shop and she wouldn't pass a few minutes with you even though you'd been in yesterday. The only good part of being in this city was the public houses where you'd meet boys from home, where there was a bit of banter and cheerfulness, and a singsong when it was permitted. But when the evening was over you were on your own again.

"Why would you go back, boy?"

"It doesn't suit me."

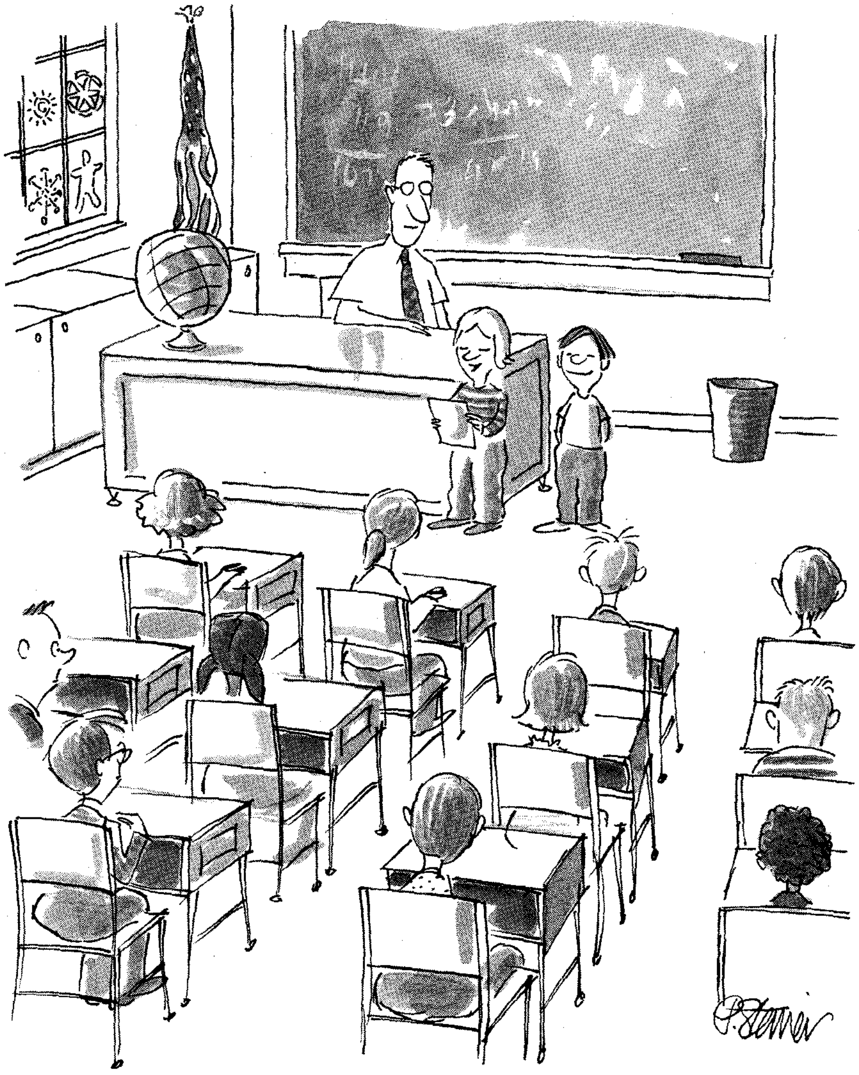
"I know what you mean. I often thought of it myself."

"It's no life for a young fellow."

"They've driven you out. They spent eight centuries tormenting us and now they're at it again."

"He called my mam a hooer."

Huxter wasn't fit to tie Mrs. Brogan's laces, Feeny said. He'd seen it before, he said. "They're all the same, boy."


" 'What I Did Last Summer,' by Scott Sweningen, as told to Samantha Gerhart."

"I'll finish out the few weeks with the job we're on."

"You'll be home for Christmas."

"I will."

They were walking slowly on the street, the public houses emptying, the night air dank and cold. Feeny paused in a pool of darkness, beneath a street light that wasn't working. Softly, he said, "Mr. McTighe has the business for you."

It sounded like another tip, but Feeny said no. He walked on in silence, and Liam Pat said to himself it would be another job, a different foreman. He thought about that. Huxter was the worst of it, but it wasn't only Huxter. Liam Pat was homesick for the estate, for the small town where people said hullo to you. Since he'd been here he'd eaten any old how, sandwiches he bought the evening before, for breakfast and again in the middle of the day, burger and chips later on, Bob's Dining Rooms on a Sunday. He hadn't thought about that before he'd come—what he'd eat, what a Sunday would be like. Sometimes at Mass he saw a girl he liked the look of, the same girl each time, quiet-featured, with her hair tied back. But when he went up to her after Mass a few weeks back she turned away without speaking.

"I don't want another job," he said.

"Why would you, Liam Pat? After what they put you through?"

"I thought you said Mr. McTighe—"

"Ah, no, no. Mr. McTighe was only remembering the time you and Dessie Coglan used to distribute the little magazine."

They still walked slowly, Feeny setting the pace.

"We were kids, though," Liam Pat said, astonished at what was being said.

"You showed your colors all the same."

Liam Pat didn't understand that. He didn't know why they were talking about a time when he was still at the Brothers', when he and Dessie Coglan used to push the freedom magazine into the letter boxes. As soon as it was dark they'd do it, so's no one would see them. Undercover stuff, Dessie used to say, and a couple of times he mentioned Michael Collins.

"I had word from Mr. McTighe," Feeny said.

"Are we calling in there?"

"He'll have a beer for us."

"We were only being big fellas when

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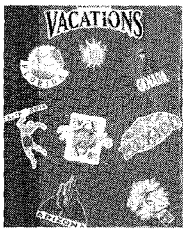

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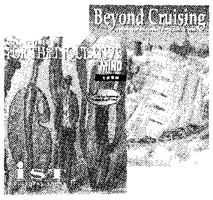

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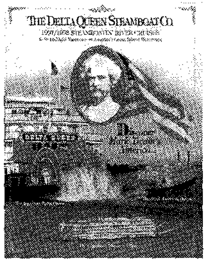

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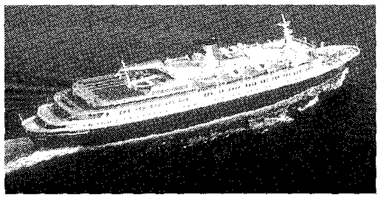

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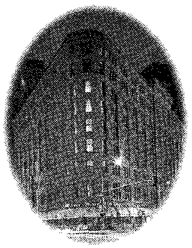

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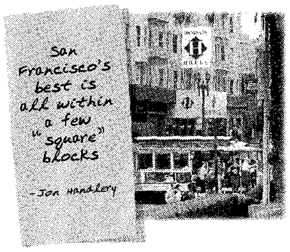

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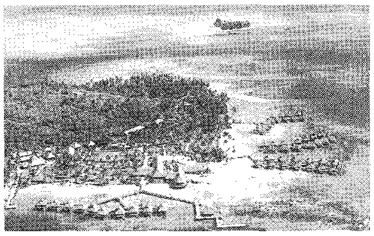

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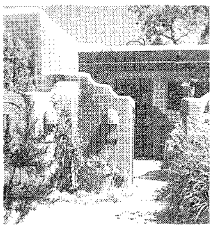

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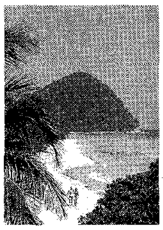

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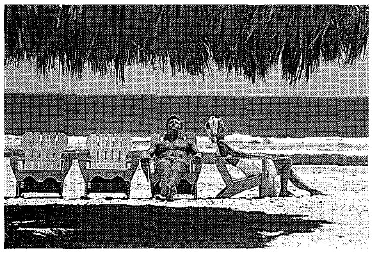

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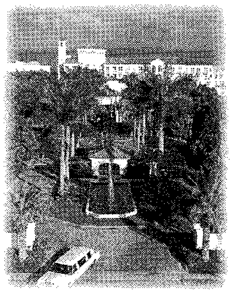

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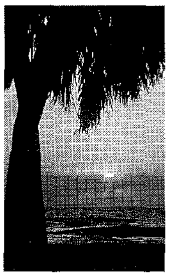

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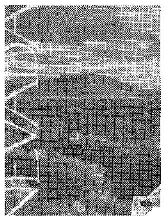

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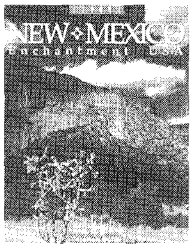

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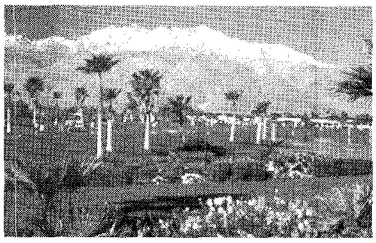

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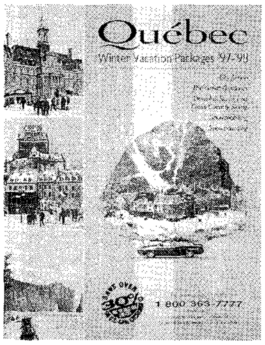

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we went round with the magazine.”

“It’s remembered you went round with it.”

Liam Pat never knew where the copies of the magazine came from. Dessie Coglan just said the lads, but more likely it was the barber, Gaughan, an elderly man who lost the four fingers of his left hand in 1921. Liam Pat often noticed Dessie coming out of Gaughan’s or talking to Gaughan in his doorway, beneath the striped barber’s pole. In spite of his fingerless hand, Gaughan could still shave a man or cut a head of hair.

“Come on in,” Mr. McTighe invited now, opening his back door to them. “That’s a raw old night.”

They sat in the kitchen again. Mr. McTighe handed round cans of Carling Black Label.

“You’ll do the business, Liam?”

“What’s that, Mr. McTighe?”

“Feeny here’ll show you the ropes.”

“The thing is, I’m going back to Ireland.”

“I thought maybe you would be. ‘There’s a man will be going home,’ I said to myself. Didn’t I say that, Feeny?”

“You did of course, Mr. McTighe.”

“What I was thinking, you’d do the little thing for me before you’d be on your way, Liam. Like we were discussing the other night,” Mr. McTighe said, and Liam Pat wondered if he’d had too much beer that night, for he couldn’t remember any kind of discussion taking place.

IN the house where Liam Pat lodged, Feeny opened the door of the room where the curtains were drawn over and took the stuff from the floorboards. He didn’t switch the light on, but instead shone a torch into where he’d lifted away a section of the boards. Liam Pat saw red and black wires and the cream-colored face of a timing device. Child’s play, Feeny said, extinguishing the torch.

Liam Pat heard the floorboards replaced. He stepped back into the passage at the back of the house, off which the door of the room opened. Together he and Feeny passed through the hall and climbed the stairs to Liam Pat’s room.

“Pull down that blind, boy,” Feeny said.

There was a photograph of Liam Pat’s mother stuck under the edge of a mirror over a washbasin; just above it, one of his father had begun to curl at the two corners that were exposed. The cheap brown suitcase he’d travelled from Ireland with was open on the floor, clothes he’d brought back from the launderette dumped in it, not yet sorted out. He’d bought the suitcase in Lacey’s, on Emmet Street, the day after he gave in his notice to O’Dwyer.

“Listen to me now,” Feeny said, sitting down on the bed.

The springs rasped noisily. Feeny put a hand out to steady the sudden lurch of the headboard. “I’m glad to see that,” he said, gesturing with his head in the direction of a card Liam Pat’s mother had made him promise he’d display in whatever room he found for himself. In the Virgin’s arms the infant Jesus raised two chubby fingers in blessing.

“I’m not into anything like you’re thinking,” Liam Pat said. “Like what’s downstairs.”

“Mr. McTighe brought you over, boy.”

Feeny’s wizened features were without expression. His priestly suit was shapeless, worn through at one of the elbows. A tie as narrow as a bootlace hung from the soiled collar of his shirt, its minuscule knot hard and shiny. He stared at his knees when he said Mr. McTighe had brought Liam Pat from Ireland.

Liam Pat said, “I came over on my own, though.”

Still examining the dark material stretched over his knees, as if fearing damage here also, Feeny shook his head.

“Mr. McTighe fixed the room. Mr. McTighe watched your welfare. ‘I like the cut of Liam Pat Brogan.’ Those were his words, boy. The day after yourself and myself went round to him the first time wasn’t he on the phone to me, 8 A.M. in the morning? Would you know what he said that time?”

“No, I wouldn’t.”

“ ‘We have a man in Liam Pat Brogan’ was what he said.”

“I couldn’t do what you’re saying all the same.”

“Listen to me, boy. They have no history on you. You’re no more than another Paddy going home for Christmas. D’you understand what I’m saying to you, Liam Pat?”

“I never heard of Mr. McTighe till I was over here.”

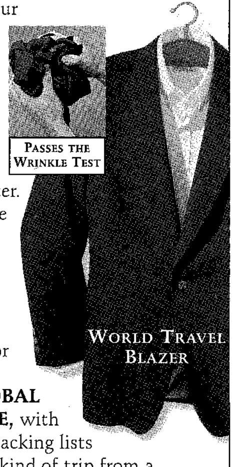
“He’s a friend to you, Liam Pat, the same way’s I am myself. Haven’t I been a friend, Liam Pat?”

“You have surely.”

“That’s all I’m saying to you.”

“I’d never have the nerve for a bomber.”

“Sure, is there anyone wants to be? Is there a man on the face of God’s earth would make a choice, boy?” Feeny



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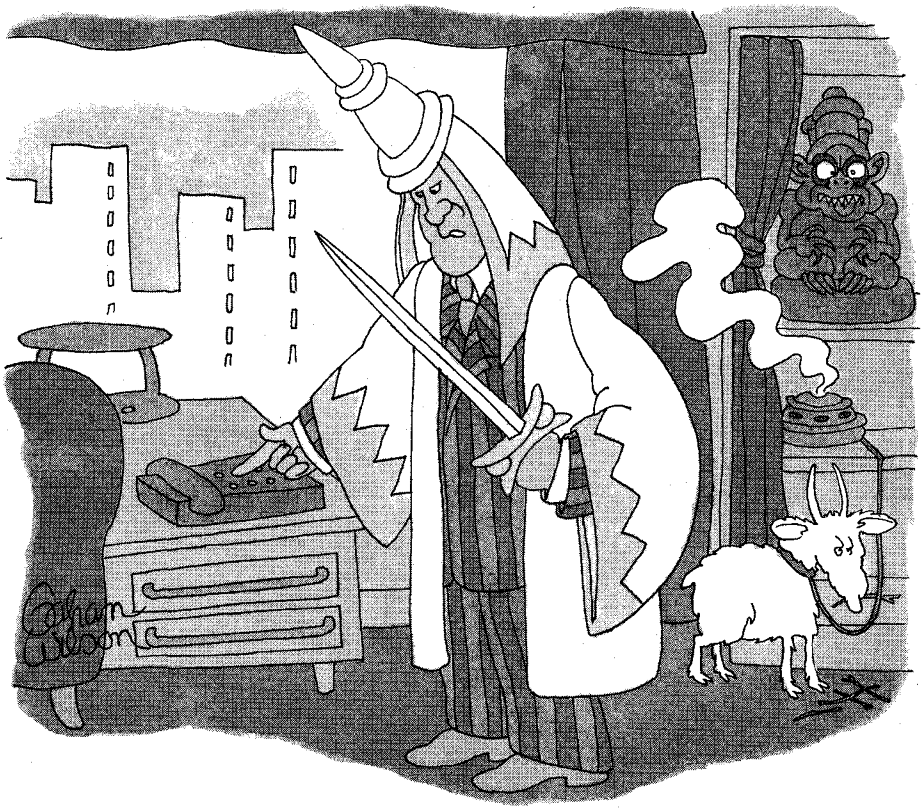

"Please hold my calls for the next fifteen minutes, Miss Hammish."

• •

paused. He took a handkerchief from a pocket of his trousers and passed it beneath his nose. For the first time since they'd entered Liam Pat's room he looked at him directly. "There'll be no harm done, boy. No harm to life or limb. Nothing the like of that."

Liam Pat frowned. He shook his head, indicating further bewilderment.

"Mr. McTighe wouldn't ask bloodshed of anyone," Feeny went on. "A Sunday night. You follow me on that? A Sunday's a dead day in the city. Not a detail of that written down, though. Neither date nor time. Nothing I'm saying to you." He tapped the side of his head. "Nothing, only memorized."

Feeny went on talking then. Because there was no chair in the room, Liam Pat sat on the floor, his back to the wall. Child's play, Feeny said again. He talked about Mr. McTighe and the mission that possessed Mr. McTighe, the same that possessed every Irishman worth his salt, the further from home he was the more it was there. "You understand me?" Feeny said often, punctuating his long speech with this query, concerned in case there was incomprehension where there should be clarity. "The dream of Wolfe Tone," he said. "The dream of Isaac Butt and Charles Stewart Parnell. The dream of Lord Edward Fitzgerald."

The names stirred classroom memories for Liam Pat, the lay teacher Riordan requesting information about them, his bitten mustache disguising a long upper lip, a dust of chalk on his pinstripes. "Was your man Fitzgerald in the Flight of the Earls?" Hasessy once asked from the back of the class, and Riordan was contemptuous.

"The massacre of the innocents," Feeny said. "Bloody Sunday." He spoke of lies and deception, of falsity and broken promises, of bullying that was hardly different from the bullying of Huxter. "O'Connell," he said. "Pearse. Michael Collins. Those are the men, Liam Pat, and you'll walk away one of them. You'll walk away ten feet high."

As a fish is attracted by a worm and yet suspicious of it, Liam Pat was drawn into Feeny's oratory. "God, you could be the Big Fella himself," Dessie Coglan had complimented him one night when they were delivering the magazines. Liam Pat had seen the roadside cross that honored the life and the death of the Big Fella; he had seen the film only a few weeks back. He leaned his head against the wall now and, while staring at Feeny, saw himself striding with Michael Collins's big stride. The torrent of Feeny's assurances and promises, and the connections Feeny made, affected him, but even so he said, "Sure, someone could be passing through."

"There'll be no one passing, boy. A Sunday night's chosen to make sure of it. Nothing only empty offices, no watchmen on the premises. All that's gone into."

Feeny pushed himself off the bed. He motioned with his hand and Liam Pat stood up. Between now and the incident, Feeny said, there would be no one in the house except Liam Pat. Write nothing down, he instructed again. "You'll be questioned after. Policemen will maybe get on the train. Or they'll be at the docks when you get there."

"What'll I say to them, though?"

"Only that you're going home to County Cork for Christmas. Only that you were nowhere near where they're asking you about. Never in your life. Never heard of it."

"Will they say do I know you? Will they say do I know Mr. McTighe?"

"They won't have those names. If they ask you for names say the lads in your gang, say Rafferty and Noonan, say any names you heard in public houses. Say Feeny and McTighe if you're stuck. They won't know who you're talking about."

"Are they not your names, then?"

"Why would they be, boy?"

Liam Pat's protestation that he couldn't do it didn't weaken at first, but as Feeny went on and on, the words becoming images in Liam Pat's vision, he himself always at the center of things, he became aware of an excitement. Huxter wouldn't know what was going to happen; Huxter would look at him and assume he was the same. The people who did not say hullo when he bought cigarettes or a newspaper would see no difference either. There was a strength in the excitement, a vigor Liam Pat had never experienced in his life before. He would carry the secret onto the site every morning. He would walk through the streets with it, a power in him where there'd been nothing before. "You have a Corkman's way with you," Feeny said, and in the room with the drawn curtains he showed Liam Pat the business.

SIXTEEN days went by before the chosen Sunday arrived. In the Spurs and Horse during that time Liam Pat wanted to talk the way Feeny and Mr. McTighe did, in the same soft manner, mysteriously, some private meaning in the words e used. He was aware of a lightness in is mood and confidence in his manner, and more easily than before he was drawn into conversation. One evening the barmaid eyed him the way Rosita Drudy used to eye Dessie Coglan years ago in Brady's Bar.

Liam Pat didn't see Feeny again, as Feeny had warned him he wouldn't. He didn't see Mr. McTighe. The man didn't call for the rent, and for sixteen days Liam Pat was the only person in the house. He kept to his room except when he went to take up the sawn-through floorboards, familiarizing himself with what had to be done, making sure there was space enough in the sports bag when the clock was packed in a way that was convenient to set it. He cooked nothing in the kitchen because Feeny had said better not to. He didn't understand that, but even so he obeyed the command, thinking of it in that way, an order, no questions asked. He made tea in his room, buttering bread and sprinkling sugar on the butter, opening tins of beans and soup, eating the contents cold. Five times in all he made the journey he was to make on the chosen Sunday, timing himself as Feeny had suggested, becoming used to the journey and alert to any variations there might be.

On the Saturday before the Sunday, he packed his suitcase and took it across the city to a locker at Euston Station, still following Feeny's instructions. When he returned to the house he collected what tins he'd opened and what food was left and filled a shopping bag, which he deposited in a dustbin on another street. The next day he had a meal at one o'clock in Bob's Dining Rooms, the last he would ever have there. The people were friendlier than they'd been before.

Nothing that belonged to him remained in his room, or in the house, when he left it for the last time. Feeny said to clean his room with the Philips vacuum cleaner that was kept for general use at the bottom of the stairs. He said to go over everywhere, all the surfaces, and Liam Pat did so, using the little round brush without any extension on the suction tube. For his own protection, that was. Wipe the handles of the doors with a tissue last thing of all, Feeny had advised, anywhere he might have touched.

Shortly after seven he practiced the timing again. He wanted to smoke a cigarette in the downstairs room, but he didn't because Feeny had said not to. He zipped up the sports bag and left the house with it. Outside, he lit a cigarette.

On the way to the bus stop, two streets away, he dropped the key of the house down a drain, an instruction also. When Feeny had been advising him about cleaning the surfaces and making sure nothing was left that could identify him, Liam Pat had had the impression that Mr. McTighe wouldn't have bothered with any of that, that all Mr. McTighe was interested in was getting the job done. He went upstairs on the bus and sat at the back. A couple got off at the next stop, leaving him on his own.

It was then that Liam Pat began to feel afraid. It was one thing to have it over Huxter, to know what Huxter didn't know; it was one thing to get a smile from the barmaid. It was another altogether to be sitting on a bus with a device in a sports bag. The excitement that had first warmed him while he listened to Feeny, while he sat on the floor with his head resting against the wall, wasn't there anymore. Mr. McTighe picking him out felt different now, and when he tried to see himself in Michael Collins's trenchcoat, with Michael Collins's stride, there was nothing there, either. It sounded meaningless, Feeny saying he had a Corkman's way with him.

He sat with the sports bag on the floor, steadied by his feet on either side of it. A weakness had come into his arms, and for a moment he thought he wouldn't be able to lift them, but when he tried it was all right, even though the feeling of weakness was still there. A moment later nausea caused him to close his eyes.

The bus lurched and juddered through the empty Sunday-evening streets. Idling at bus stops, its engine vibrated, and between his knees Liam Pat's hand repeatedly reached down to seize the handles of the sports bag, steadying it further. He wanted to get off, to hurry down the stairs that were beside where he was sitting, to jump off the bus while it was still moving, to leave the sports bag where it was. He sensed what he did not understand: that all this had happened before, that his terror had come so suddenly because he was experiencing, again, what he had experienced already.

Two girls came chattering up the stairs and walked down the length of the bus. They laughed as they sat down, one of them bending forward, unable to control

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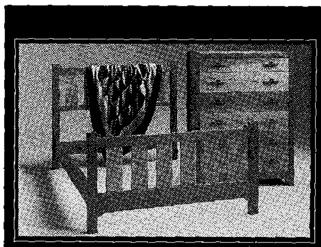
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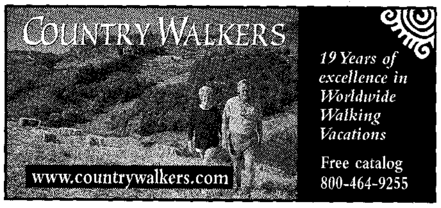
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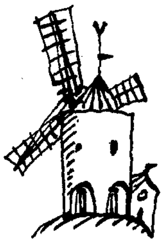
herself. The other went on with what she was saying, laughing, too, but Liam Pat couldn’t hear what she said. The conductor came for their fares and when he’d gone they found they didn’t have a light for their cigarettes. The one who’d laughed so much was on the inside, next to the window. The other one got up. “Ta,” she said when she had asked Liam Pat if he had a lighter and he handed her his box of matches. He didn’t strike one because of the shaking in his hands, but even so she must have seen it. “Ta,” she said again.

It could have been in a dream. He could have dreamed he was on a bus with the bag. He could have had a dream and forgotten it, like you sometimes did. The night he’d seen Feeny for the last time, it could have been he had a dream of being on a bus, and he tried to remember waking up the next morning, but he couldn’t.

The girl next to the window looked over her shoulder, as if she’d just been told that he’d handed her friend the box instead of striking a match for her. They’d remember him because of that. The one who’d approached him would remember the sports bag. “Cheers,” the same one said when they both left the bus a couple of stops later.

It wasn’t a dream. It was the *Examiner* spread out on the kitchen table a few months ago and his father shaking his head over the photograph of a funeral procession, sourly demanding why those people couldn’t have been left to their grief, why there were men in balaclava helmets standing by to carry the coffin of a boy who’d blown himself up in London, what remained of him brought home. “My God! My God!” his father savagely exclaimed.



It hadn’t worked that first time. A Sunday night then, too, another boy, another bus. Liam Pat tried to remember that boy’s name, but he couldn’t. “Poor bloody hero,” his father said, pushing the *Examiner* away from him.

Another Dessie Coglan had fixed it, in touch with another Gaughan, in touch with the lads. Another Huxter was specially picked. Another Feeny said there’d be time to spare to get to Euston afterward, no harm to life or limb, ten exactly the train was. The bits and pieces had been scraped up from the pavement and the street, skin and bone, part of a wallet fifty yards away. The lads paraded at the funeral.

Big Ben was chiming eight when he got off the bus, carrying the sports bag slightly away from his body, although he knew that was a pointless precaution. His hands weren’t shaking anymore, the sickness in his stomach had passed, but still he was afraid, the same fear that had begun on the bus, cold in him now.

Not far from where Big Ben had sounded there was a bridge over the river. He’d crossed it with Rafferty and Noonan his first weekend in London, when they’d thought they were going to Fulham, only they got it all wrong. He knew which way to go, but when he reached the river wall he had to wait because there were people around, and cars going by. And when the moment came, when he had the bag on the curved top of the wall, another car went by and he thought it would stop and come back, that the people in it would know. But that car went on, and the bag fell with hardly a splash into the river, and nothing happened.

O’DWYER had work for him, only he’d have to wait until March, until old Hoyne reached the month of his retirement. Working the mixer it would be again, tarring roofs, sweeping the yard at the end of the day. He’d get on grand, O’Dwyer said. Wait awhile and you’d never know; wait awhile and Liam Pat could be his right-hand man. There were no hard feelings because Liam Pat had taken himself off for a while.

“Keep your tongue to yourself,” Mrs. Brogan had warned her husband in a quiet moment the evening Liam Pat so unexpectedly returned. It surprised them that he had come the way he had, a roundabout route, when he might have come the way he went, the Wexford crossing. “I missed the seven train,” he lied, and Mrs. Brogan knew he was lying because she had that instinct with her children. Maybe something to do with a girl, she imagined, his suddenly coming back. But she left that uninvestigated, too.

“Ah, sure, it doesn’t suit everyone,” Dessie Coglan said in Brady’s Bar. Any day now it was for Rosita and he was full of that. He never knew a woman get pregnant as easy as Rosita, he said. He didn’t ask Liam Pat if he’d used the telephone number he’d given him, if that was how he’d got work. “You could end up with fourteen of them,” he said. Rosita herself was one of eleven.

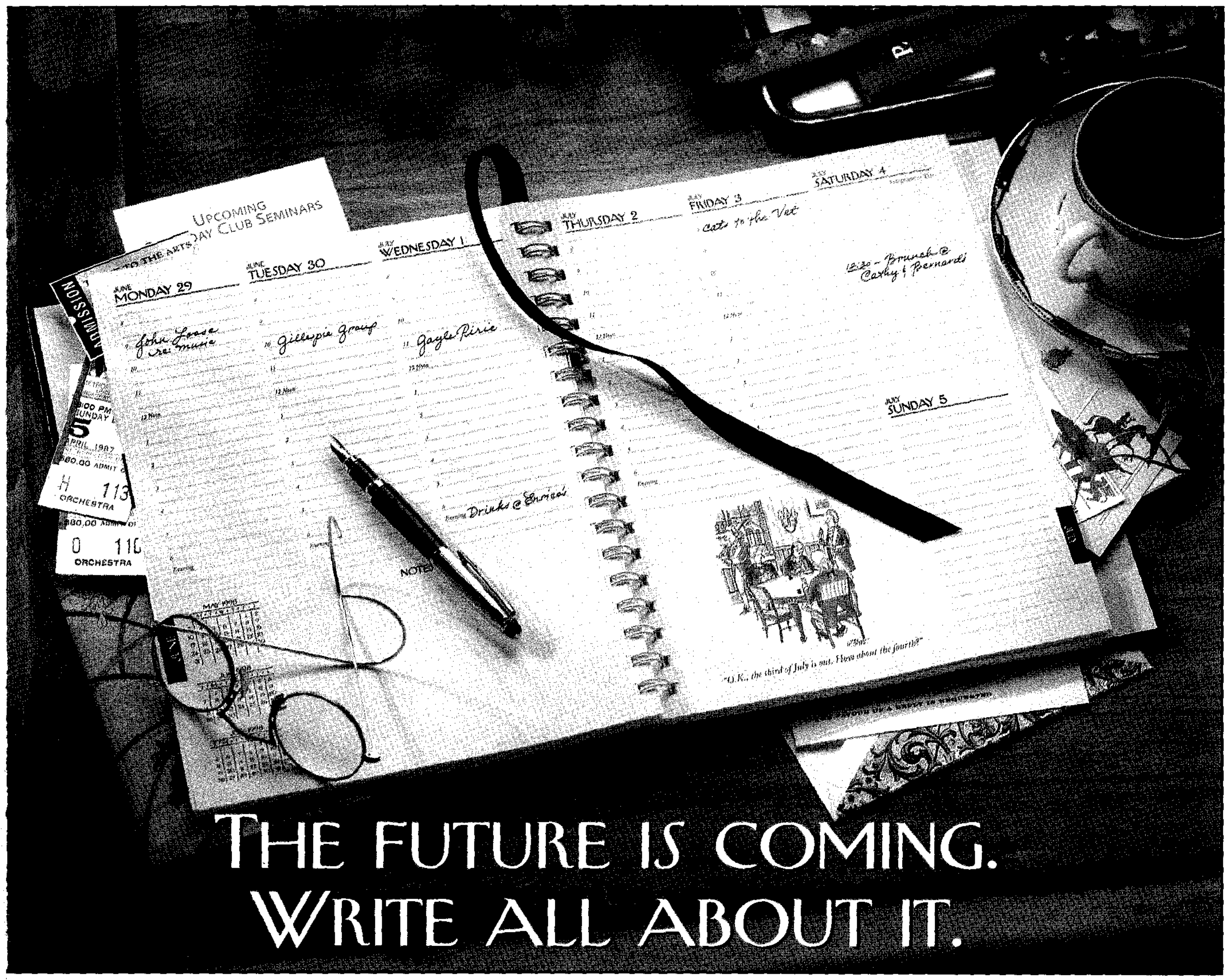
Liam Pat didn’t say much, either to O’Dwyer or at home or to Dessie Coglan. Time hung heavy while old Hoyne worked out the few months left of his years with O’Dwyer. Old Hoyne had never risen to being more than a general laborer, and Liam Pat knew he never would, either.

He walked out along the Mountross road every afternoon, the icy air of a bitterly cold season harsh on his hands and face. Every day of January and a milder February, going by the rusted gates of Mountross Abbey and the signpost to Ballyfen, he thought about the funeral at which there’d been the unwanted presence of the lads, and sometimes saw it as his own.

All his life he would never be able to tell anyone. He could never describe that silent house or the stolid features of Mr. McTighe or repeat Feeny’s talk. He could never speak of the girls on the bus, how he hadn’t been able to light a match, or how so abruptly he realized that this was the second attempt. He could never say that he’d stood with the sports bag on the river wall, that nothing had happened when it struck the water. Nor that he cried when he walked away, that tears ran down his cheeks and onto his clothes, that he cried for the bomber who might have been himself.

He might have left the bag on the bus, as he had thought he would. He might have hurried down the stairs and jumped off quickly. But in his fear he had found a shred of courage and it had to do with the boy; he knew that now and could remember the feeling. It was his mourning of the boy, as he might have mourned himself.

On his walks, and when he sat down to his meals, and when he listened to his parents’ conversation, the mourning was still there, lonely and private. It was there in Brady’s Bar and in the shops of the town when he went on his mother’s errands. It would be there when again he took charge of a concrete mixer for O’Dwyer, when he shovelled wet cement and worked in all weathers. On the Mountross road Liam Pat didn’t walk with the stride of Michael Collins, but wondered instead about the courage his fear had allowed, and begged that his mourning would not ever cease. ♦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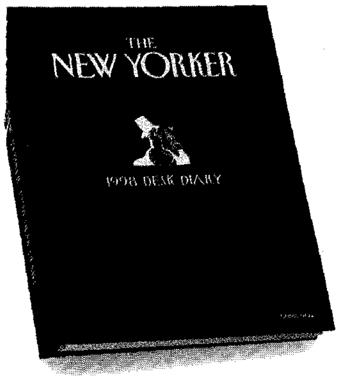
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BOOKS

DESIGNATED HERO

In baseball and afterward, Jackie Robinson was never easy—least of all on himself.

BY ROGER ANGELL

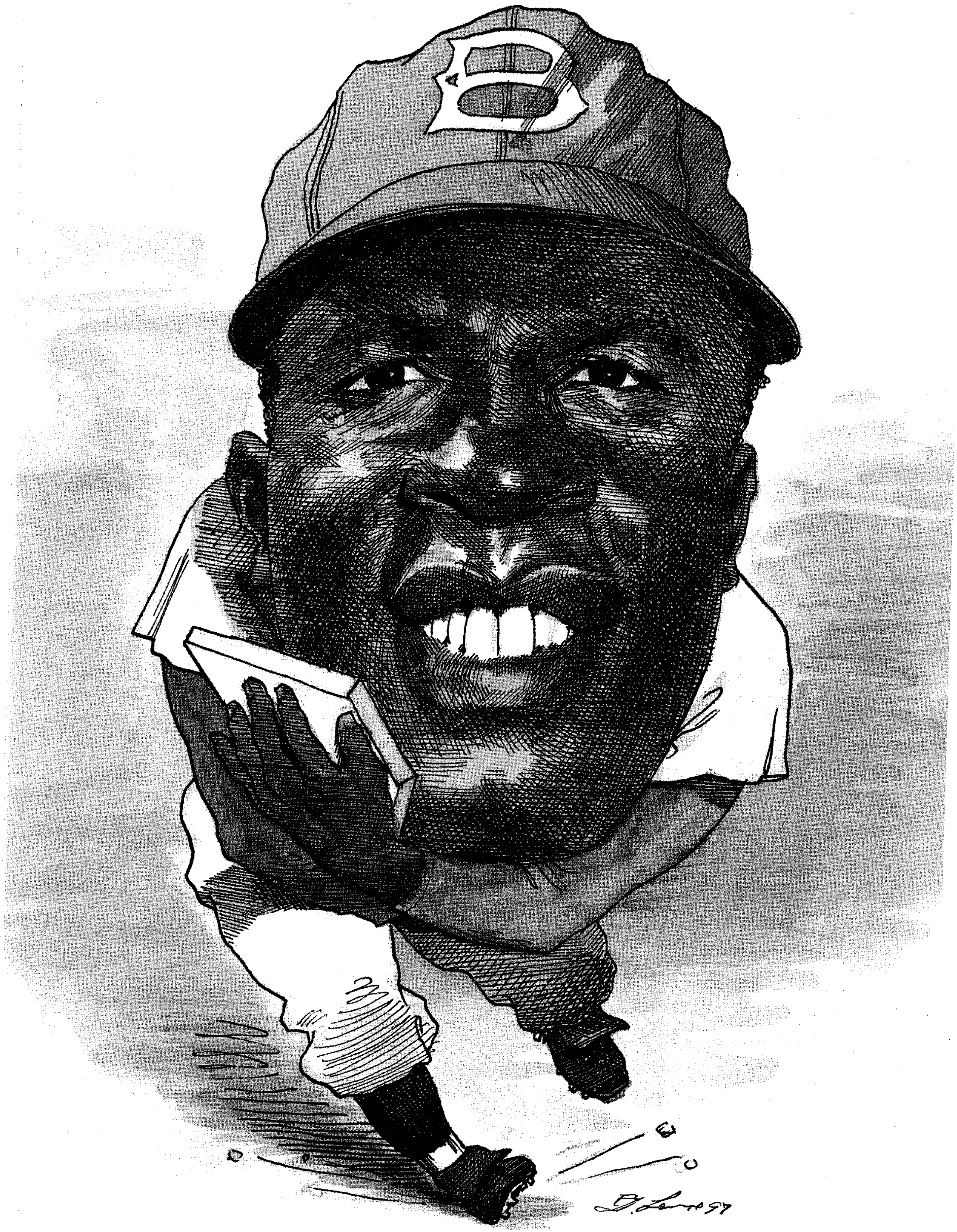
For the sports biographer, the peculiar challenge of the genre is that the best stuff always comes first: glowing youthful promise is followed by a decade of thrilling achievements, famous victories, championships, riches, honor, and retirement—then forty years of golf and after-dinner anecdotes. Arnold Rampersad, the author of "Jackie Robinson" (Knopf; $27.50), has been spared most of these difficulties, because Robinson's arrival in Brooklyn to join the Dodgers, in 1947, as the first black player to be admitted to the major leagues is a sports story like no other, and because Robinson—who died sixteen years after he stepped down from baseball, in 1956—continued, once out of uniform, doing the same basic work he had done so vividly and urgently on the field: he wanted to get the black American a break. There were times in baseball when it looked as if the cost of that struggle might be too much for him, and after reading this book one is compelled to believe that it killed him in the end.

This 1997 baseball season has been dedicated to Robinson, in celebration of the fiftieth year since his arrival in the majors. A trumpeting documentary has been playing, before games or during rain delays, in stadiums across the land; President Clinton joined Robinson's widow, Rachel, on the field at Shea Stadium at a memorial ceremony this April; and Jackie's old uniform number, 42, has been permanently "retired" from all twenty-eight team rosters (even from teams that had not previously observed the custom) and heraldically emblazoned on outfield walls, in many cases next to the numbers of local godlings he once tried so hard (and contrived so often) to beat. Baseball dearly loves a chance to forgather and commemorate, but nothing of this order has happened before. If major-league baseball has seized upon the anniversary to touch up its own imperfect image in contemporary racial awareness, many of us have also sensed within ourselves a glow of good feeling about the Robinson parable. This considerable book arrives just in time to save the man from his own legend: despite certain limitations, it is a sports story for adults.

I must have watched Robinson play in twenty or thirty games (watched from the stands: I had not yet begun to follow the sport as a reporter), and I saw him via television in many more, so the book revived for me, as it will for other New York fans of my era, some strong images of him in action, with his top-hand, front-footed swing and that distinctive arm-churning rush around the base paths. The games he played in always felt important, not just because the Dodgers won six pennants during his ten-year career (they went on to face the Yankees in all six of those World Series) but because he was on hand, out there in the middle of things and in the middle of your attention. Thanks to baseball's implacable color bar, Robinson was twenty-eight by the time he made it into the majors, and he hurried to achieve, winning a Rookie of the Year award in his first season and being named the National League's Most Valuable Player in 1949. His .342 batting average that season was tops in his league, but at his peak he dominated games by a highly visible, relentless application of will to every aspect of play—hitting, power, defense, baserunning, opportunism. He wore out pitchers and teams—and he wore you out, watching. In my mind's video I can still punch up Jackie's twilight, twelfth-inning horizontal dive and midair catch behind second base against the Phillies which kept the Dodgers alive on the final day of the 1951 season (he was knocked cold on landing but held on to the ball; then he hit the game-winning home run in the fourteenth), just as I can bring back his edgy, fluttering leads off third base that would precede another wild sprint home and scudding slide across the plate. Stealing home is the riskiest and most individualistic option that the game supplies, and Robinson pulled it off nineteen times in his career. His biographer quotes a summation by the old *Post* lyricist Jimmy Cannon, who wrote that Robinson was not as prolific as Ralph Kiner, or a greater hitter than Ted Williams, or as "serenely dependable" as Stan Musial, or possessed of DiMaggio's "languid grace." "But you can do more things than any ballplayer of your time," Cannon went on. (The second-person singular was his signature declension.) "You had more ways to beat the other people than any man in your time."

Because of the circumstances of Robinson's arrival, his fame always went beyond his feats on the field: by the end of his rookie season, he had appeared on the cover of *Time*, and a poll that autumn found him to be the second most popular American, trailing Bing Crosby but ahead of President Truman, General Eisenhower, General MacArthur, and everybody else. As this meticulously researched book makes clear, the covertly planned, boldly executed campaign by the Dodger president, Branch Rickey, which selected Jackie Robinson (he was then playing with the Kansas City Monarchs, of the Negro Leagues) as the lone forerunner, the lead-off hero, to break baseball's ancient barrier, and Robinson's superhuman non-belligerence in the face of widespread front-office opposition and blatant on-the-field hatred brought a success beyond all expectation, particularly for blacks. By the end of that first season, as Rampersad puts it, Robinson had "passed now into the pantheon of their greatest heroes, actual and legendary—the slave revolutionary Nat Turner and the abolitionist Frederick Douglass, the steel-driving John Henry and the roustabout Stagolee."

Small wonder that the Robinson story should ring out in tones like these. To this day, Branch Rickey's bluntly



Each theft of home was a breathtaking illustration of the panache and daring that Jackie Robinson brought to baseball.

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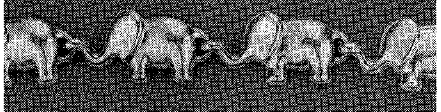

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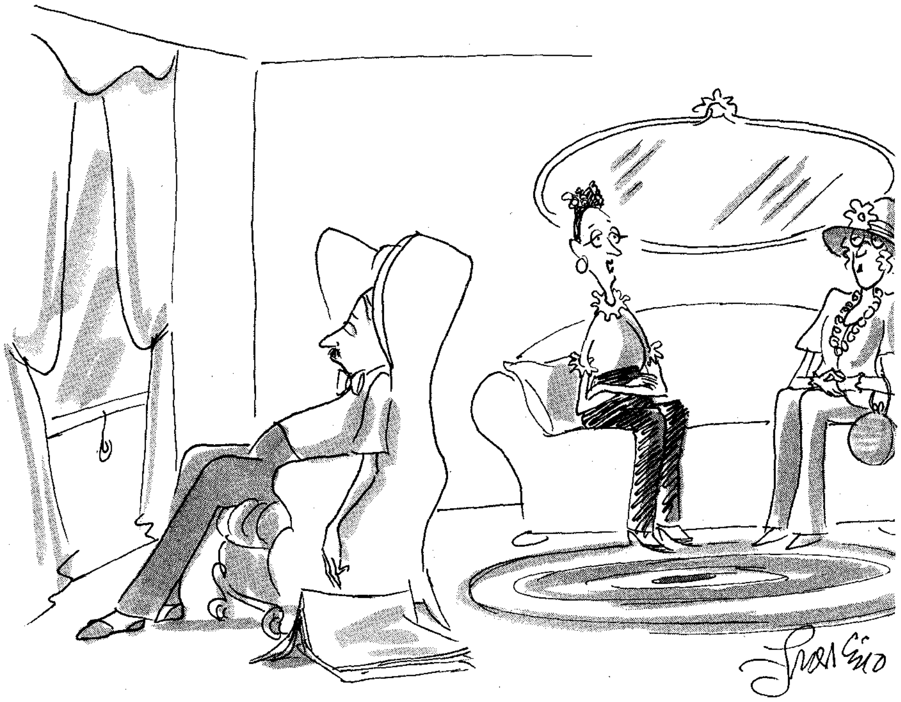
stated terms to Jackie at their first meeting—"I'm looking for a ballplayer with guts enough not to fight back"—sound like the conditions of a dreadful spell imposed at the beginning of one of the sterner Grimm's fairy tales, and Jackie's dutiful acquiescence and ultimate victory become the joyful (if predictable) playing out of the tale. Much as we revel in the outcome, we should continue to ask ourselves if the burden wasn't too much to bear, falling as it did not upon a mythical prince but upon a lone young black ballplayer. In any case, Robinson's struggles that year in the dark wood of the big leagues have become as much a part of baseball's saga as Babe Ruth's homers and Sandy Koufax's fastball, and if the ugly details of that experience, arrayed here once again, are no longer really startling, they acquire a gruesome weight in the context of a life that demanded, from first to last, a ferocious resistance to the batterings of racism.

Robinson was never easy, even with himself. "Jackie wasn't a very likable person," a friend from his teen-age years in Pasadena remembered, "because his whole thing was just win, win, win, and beat everybody." What he had going for him was his prodigal athletic ability—he was the first student at U.C.L.A. to win varsity letters in baseball, football, basketball, and track in a single season, and in the service he won, almost offhandedly, the Army table-tennis championship—and the capacity to draw comfort and boundless support from the strong-willed, imaginative figures who were central to his life: his mother, Mallie; Branch Rickey; and his wife, Rachel. His mother, to whom Jack attributed his continuing religious faith, was the instigator of an emigration of thirteen family members (including one-year-old Jack and four siblings) from the lynch-prone, Klan-infested environs of Grady County, Georgia, all the way to Pasadena, in 1920. Poverty was still a daily reality for black families out there, to be sure—Mallie continued to work as a domestic in white Pasadena households even when Jackie had become a headline college star—but sports-mad California before the war provided inviting paths to a young and gifted all-around jock. Rickey, for his part, appeared to take Jackie into his own family in the course of an intimacy that lasted until his death; according to a grandson, he was "simply overwhelmed by Jackie Robinson, the quality of the man."

Perhaps to his credit, the author (he is the Woodrow Wilson Professor of Literature at Princeton) avoids many emotional summations like his Nat Turner passage and relies instead on an accountant-like (or a box-score-like) presentation of date and detail to tell us



"Last week, I think I had a near-life experience."

painful things. Shortly before Jackie's prearrangements with the Dodgers, for instance, he had taken part in a tryout with the Red Sox at Fenway Park, where he rattled drives against and over the Green Monster left-field wall. "What a ballplayer!" the Sox chief scout, Hughie Duffy, is said to have exclaimed. "Too bad he's the wrong color." Robinson never expected anything to come of the tryout, and nothing did. Later, when Jack and his new wife, Rachel, were flying from California to Florida for his first spring training with the Dodgers, the two were bumped from their plane in New Orleans and could not find space on another flight that would carry them to their destination. They were the wrong color, and they ended up making a sixteen-hour trip to Jacksonville on the Jim Crow back seats of a bus, surrounded by black field hands. Again, Jackie was unsurprised. Before this, as a second lieutenant at Fort Hood, Texas, during the war, he had undergone a full court-martial procedure, arising from an incident on a bus during which he had refused to accept a back seat and had taken umbrage at being called a nigger. He won a full acquittal, but, as Rampersad concludes, the Army had come close to destroying him.

In the book, as in his life, Jackie Robinson seizes attention not only by his heroic self-control during the redneck vilifications and incipient player strikes of that first season but by his quite different demeanor afterward. This is where the legend always seems to stop. After the arrival of other blacks in the majors, he became not simply more assertive on the field but edgy and shrill. Hating defeat in any form, at times almost unhinged by the smallest perception of unfairness, he was prone to explosive losses of composure. He feuded bitterly with the umpires—they were all white—suspecting a bias in their calls. Almost inevitably, he was soon being unfavorably compared by fans and writers to his great black teammate the easygoing Roy Campanella. In a 1954 game in Milwaukee against the Braves, when a carelessly flipped bat got away from him following his ejection by an ump and landed in the stands, his reputation was so damaged around the league that the magazine *Sport* called him "the most

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Elizabeth McCracken

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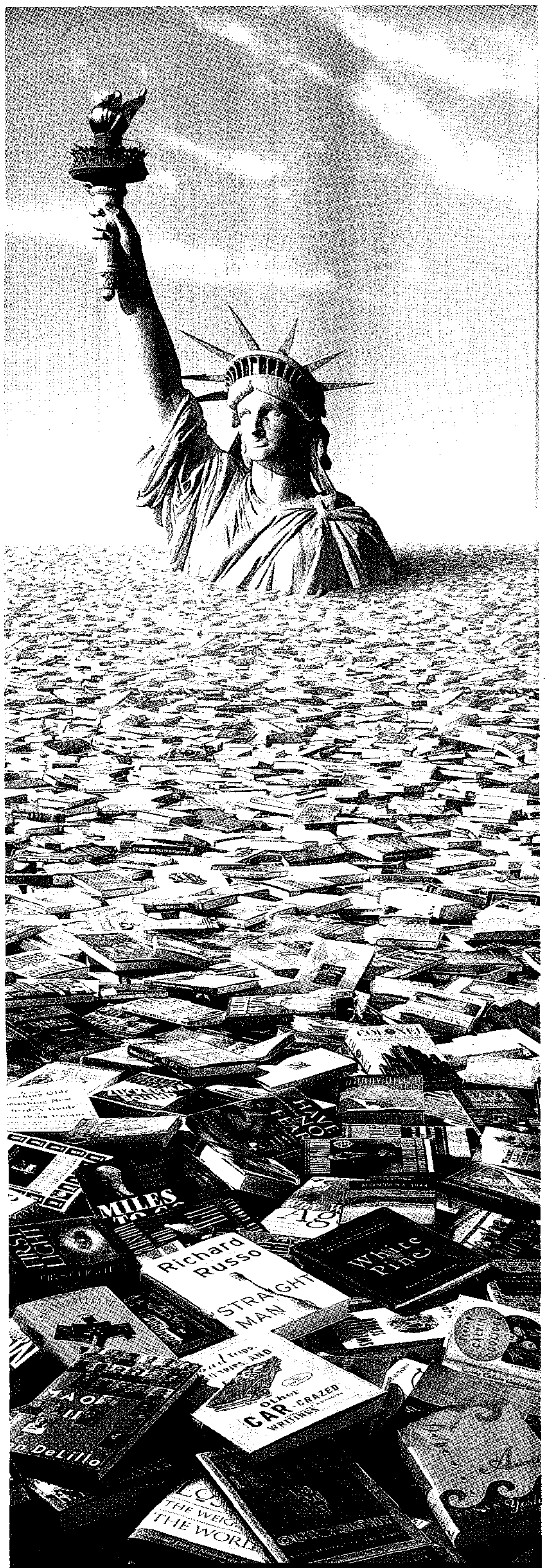

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savagely booed, intensively criticized, ruthlessly libeled player in the game." Another day, convinced that the Braves pitcher Lew Burdette was delivering racist slurs from the bench, he fired a ball at him from the field, barely missing his head. He had come full circle.

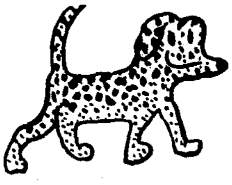
Robinson was still revered by Brooklyn fans, and appreciated by his fellow-Dodgers, who maintained an embattled family intimacy as a successful team that had survived hard trials; rookies of that era recall that Jackie often went out of his way to welcome them aboard. The book makes frequent mention of his sweetness and shyness and lists his many friends, but there is a sense of difficulty about him, too—for a biographer as well as for the people in his life. "Jackie was not too close to many people," a political assistant of Robinson's remarked some years later. "He was embarrassed by adulation. On the other hand, he wanted desperately to be liked. . . . He was a very good man, but in many ways he was a sort of mystery." If we never feel quite close to the man in the book, it may also be because Rampersad, who did not know Robinson, appears scrupulously intent on maintaining a space between himself and his subject. To find the warmer Jackie, one must go back to his daughter Sharon's memoir, "Stealing Home," or to Roger Kahn's exemplary "The Boys of Summer."

Robinson aged quickly in the game, even as his records and field achievements piled up, and he became a cranky teammate, estranged from Campanella, critical of his manager, Walt Alston, and at odds with the Dodgers' owner, Walter O'Malley, who had forced Rickey out of the business. In his letters home to Rachel from spring training Robinson complained about the boredom and the lingering Jim Crow atmosphere of Southern towns and also about teammates' spitting on the floor of the clubhouse. Outside events—the 1956 bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama, and the epidemic of arrests and violence that ensued—had their effect as well, bringing Robinson's attention to the civil-rights movement while deepening suspicion of him within the staid halls of the game. The author's particular achievement is his double exploration of two complex and disparate public arenas—baseball and racial politics—along with his patient parallel study of a strong, difficult, and driven subject.

As I was reading about Jackie, it occurred to me more than once that his biographer might have been tempted to center a book on Rachel Robinson instead of on her more celebrated husband. From the moment they met, as fellow-students at U.C.L.A., the two were interdependent—they continued so even after his death, as she administered the considerable structure and ramifications of his fame, including the Jackie Robinson Foundation, which has provided college scholarships to more than four hundred and fifty black students—and her multiple concerns and careers appear to have been more suavely and decisively put together than his. A model baseball wife, she attended just about every Dodger home game during his ten-year career; she was mother to their three children; ran an active household in the comfortably upper-class, almost entirely white exurb of Stamford, Connecticut; and pursued graduate studies that led to a degree, to a job in psychiatric nursing, and, in time, to a full professorship at the Yale School of Nursing. In Jackie's increasingly busy and beset last decade and a half, she held things together.

ROBINSON took on life after baseball without regret (by 1958, he had failed to attend a single game) and in a rush of energy. He does not appear to have been much disconcerted by the demands on his time and his privacy which his fame had brought down upon him; indeed, he may have welcomed them, as giving him a means of having his say. If there is anything dated about Jackie Robinson now, it is this role of citizen-celebrity that he took on so readily—an attitude that feels a million miles removed from the agented, image-centered, overmoneyed vacuity of so many enormous sports figures of our time. Hired as the vice-president in charge of personnel of the Chock Full o' Nuts food chain—apparently a real job, not a sinecure—he also directed a long-term major fund-raising campaign for the N.A.A.C.P., took on a weekly radio show, and wrote a sports and commentary column for the *Post* three days a week. Later on, he played a significant part in the development of Harlem's Freedom National

Bank. Racial politics engaged him increasingly, and he seems to have been for-ever on call around the country to chair a dinner, deliver an address, or receive an honorary degree. He led two of the earliest Washington marches, and, at the request of Martin Luther King, Jr., he spoke in Albany, Georgia, after the infamous and racially charged burning of the Mount Olive Baptist Church. If this side of the man is less familiar than his baseball doings, it may be because Robinson was an integrationist by conviction and, like many other Southern-born African-Americans, a Republican. He was courted by the Democrats in 1960, but he mistrusted John F. Kennedy (he preferred the more fervent Bobby), and, while Rachel voted for J.F.K., he campaigned assiduously for Nixon; he was also cool toward the Texan Lyndon Johnson, in spite of the significant alterations achieved by the Civil Rights Act. His strongest political attachment was to Governor Nelson Rockefeller, a liberal Republican outside the main swim of the sixties, whose record became blotted by his violent suppression of the Attica prison uprising.



Silver-haired by now, long famous, and weighted with honors (he had been taken into baseball's Hall of Fame in 1962), the later Robinson sometimes suggests a perpetual second-level Presidential candidate, never reticent but repeatedly forced by an admirable quirkiness into an awkward or slightly irrelevant position. Often, he appeared to disagree with *everybody*, attacking J.F.K. for not sending troops into Birmingham, and finding fault with Roy Wilkins, of the N.A.A.C.P., for his racial conservatism, with Martin Luther King for his stand on Vietnam, and with H. Rap Brown and Stokely Carmichael for what he viewed as their irresponsibility. He admired Ralph Bunche, the staid, long-term United Nations delegate, but he was disappointed in the "extreme views" of Muhammad Ali. Of Malcolm X he said, "Malcolm has big audiences but no constructive program." Politics seemed to present as many frustrations to Robinson as baseball had, but without providing the release of being his own master once he was out on the field. In the middle of the 1960 Presidential campaign, he had pleaded almost frantically with Nixon to call King, who had just been sentenced to four months in jail in Georgia. Jack Kennedy, in a celebrated gesture, did call King's wife, Coretta, but Nixon refused to "grandstand"—and perhaps lost the election right there.

Seen through the rearview mirror of political history, Jackie looks a bit diminished and sad. Ali, not Robinson, became the charismatic sports figure of our era, but, for all the pleasure that America has taken in the champion's charm and courage and entrancing cool, there's probably more Jackie than Ali in most of us. Robinson, to be sure, was not the first public figure to lose his footing in the earthquake of the sixties; he knew most of the great Americans of his time, and the appalling removal of so many of them by assassination hit him hard. He admired Malcolm X, in spite of their differences, and two years after his death he recalled a poignant prophecy of Malcolm's: "Jackie, in days to come, your son and my son will not be willing to settle for things we are willing to settle for."

Questions about Robinson's sophistication and competence as a political figure and a minority spokesman are perhaps inevitable. Professor Rampersad never suggests that the accident of history which pushed this professional athlete into the forefront of national attention was particularly cruel or ironic, but his tone throughout the book remains so distantly calm and studious as to make us wonder whether he may not be concealing a judgment or a reservation about his subject. Nor does he quote enough of Robinson's writings—from the *Post* columns, say, or from any of his innumerable speeches—to allow us to weigh the man's thinking as well as his heart and character.

History was not quite through with Robinson. During the sixties, Jackie, Jr., the oldest of his children, encountered most of the difficulties and confusions that descend on the sons of the famous, and they were compounded by the racial and social complications of his time. A reluctant student and a dropout, he ran away, then made his way home again, but could not seem to settle on anything;

BRIEFLY NOTED

AMERICAN SCRIPTURE: MAKING THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, by Pauline Maier (Knopf; $27.50). In the spring of 1776, with a British invasion fleet on its way, the Second Continental Congress appointed a committee to compose a statement explaining America's decision to seek independence. Thomas Jefferson was the principal drafter of the statement, but Maier makes it clear that his task was to express the sentiments of the Congress, not his personal views, and she shows that when the congressmen edited his draft they improved it greatly (rather than "mangling" it, as Jefferson ever after maintained). The Declaration of Independence is, she argues, a profoundly collective document, both in its origins and in our still-evolving interpretation of its self-evident truths.

GEORGE ELIOT: A LIFE, by Rosemary Ashton (Penguin; $32.95). George Eliot has paid for her intellectual seriousness in this century much as she paid for her unsanctioned marriage in the last. Some of her biographers have perpetuated the comfortable notion that female genius necessarily comes with excessive emotional frailty while others have exhibited Eliot's mind like a curiosity behind glass. Ashton does neither; instead, she argues that Eliot's brilliance, proud prickliness, need, and dignity were the sources of her best writing. The result is a lively and nuanced portrait of the sort that Eliot herself so rigorously drew, in which human complexity produces its own singular reward.

THE KILLING SEASON, by Miles Corwin (Simon & Schuster; $23). While the O. J. Simpson case was distracting the public and absorbing the energies of the Los Angeles Police Department, Pete Razanskas, a homicide detective, and his trainee-partner, Marcella Winn, were trying to solve some of South Central's less newsworthy murders; virtually the only resources that they had available were intelligence, stamina, and each other. These detectives—one a Vietnam vet, the other an imposing African-American woman—bear no resemblance to the L.A.P.D. officers who have become infamous over the last few years. Their compassion and their story—as told by a shadowing L.A. *Times* reporter—are both compelling.

THE COLONEL: THE LIFE AND LEGEND OF ROBERT R. MCCORMICK, 1880-1955, by Richard Norton Smith (Houghton Mifflin; $35). A balanced view of an unbalanced personality, this biography of the proprietor of the Chicago *Tribune* is a fascinating account of one of the last of a vanished breed—a media mogul who regarded his communications empire as a vehicle for self-expression. Canny about the business side, on the editorial side McCormick was ideologically bizarre and a dedicated hater. However, like his contemporary Hearst, he could sell his papers but not his politics: nothing he printed could defeat Franklin Roosevelt or elect Douglas MacArthur.

at last, he enlisted in the Army, just in time for Vietnam. Quickly finding himself in combat, he was wounded, and came back an addict; arrested and jailed, he became estranged from his father, went into rehab—the whole thing. In the summer of 1971, apparently just at the moment of his recovery, he died in a car crash. Even before this blow, Jackie himself had become enfeebled by ill health: half blind from diabetes, and afflicted by a weak heart—both diseases particularly debilitating to people under stress—he was suddenly an old man.

His last public appearance, nine days before his death, in October, 1972, was at the second game of the World Series when a brief field ceremonial led by Commissioner Bowie Kuhn honored him on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his entry into the majors. Jackie, speaking softly in his distinctively high, penetrating tone—I was in the press box that day and I can still hear him—said that he was extremely pleased and proud to be there. "But I'll be more pleased," he went on, "the day I can look over at third base and see a black man as manager." ♦

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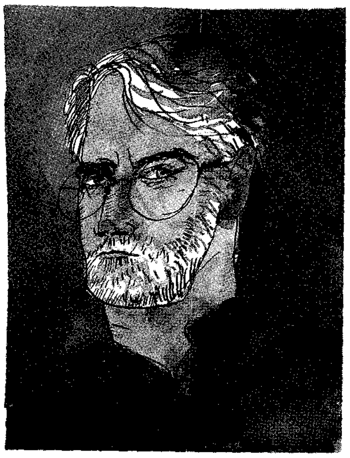

Larry Baker

THE Flamingo, on a seaside stretch of highway outside Jacksonville, Florida, is the country's biggest drive-in movie theatre. How big is it? It's so big that the crews of shrimping boats way offshore can catch features free. It's so big that its owners, the Lee family, actually make their home inside the screen tower, and have plenty of space left over to lodge their various employees. Larry Baker's winning first novel, "The Flamingo Rising" (Knopf; $24), is all about the seductions of the outsized and the outlandish, and his own sense of theatre is so grand that only after three hundred pages does everything come joltingly into focus.

"The Flamingo Rising" is narrated by one Abraham Isaac Lee, who grows up in a world buffeted by the eccentricities of his flamboyant father, Hubert Lee (distantly related to Robert E. Lee), and is given its moral center by his kind and sensible mother, Edna. Hubert Lee is maddeningly and almost madly impulsive, but Abe knows that that impulsive streak is what led Hubert Lee to adopt him when he was an infant in a Seoul orphanage. In fact, Hubert's sense of family is as outsized as his home: besides Abe and his half-Korean sister, Louise, it comes to include Pete Maws, a diminutive black man who serves as the projectionist, and a pilot named Harry Lester ("sky writer and air advertiser"), whose attempts to be helpful, by turns feckless and reckless, create no end of trouble.

To those within his compound, Hubert Lee can be infinitely forgiving; but he is also capable of profound animosity, the brunt of which is received by Turner West, a funeral director whose house and business adjoin the Lees' property. Abe explains, "Turner West loved my mother. Hubert Lee loved my mother. My mother loved only my father, but he came to question that." And so one of Hubert Lee's chief projects is to make Turner West miserable, by disrupting his place of business with ever gaudier displays. To complicate matters further, Abe, on reaching his teens, falls deeply and irrevocably in love with Turner's daughter. It's a combustible combination—literally so, given Hubert Lee's fascination with fireworks.

Though "The Flamingo Rising" is set in the sixties, the upheavals that Abe confronts are distinctly local ones, and the novel ambles surefootedly from one episode to another, each unfolding as easily as an anecdote perfected by retelling. There's a terrific set piece, for instance, about the time his father schedules "The Birth of Triplets," ostensibly a scientific

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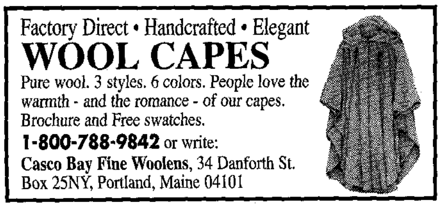

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documentary but really an opportunity for a graphic display of female anatomy. The place is packed, naturally, and Abe goes from car to car selling books on human reproduction—books with blue covers for men and pink covers for women. (Though the text is identical, the thought is that "the two sexes would never let the other see their own books.") Hubert Lee, addressing patrons over the loudspeaker, grandly intones, "Please, do not seek my men out if you are not ready for the truth about yourself. Do not force us to take your money unless you are prepared to break through that wall of metaphysical ambiguity which keeps you in the cave of your ignorance." Inside this overeducated Southern aristocrat, a carnival barker is wildly signalling to be let out.

Larry Baker has a deft way with characters, large and small: they may be Southern and eccentric, but he never lets them congeal into Southern Eccentrics. And his descriptions of the routine mechanics of a movie theatre are lovingly detailed. He tells of the day that Abe and his friend Gary have to replace Pete, the regular projectionist:

> You would have thought that those two old Simplex E-7 projectors had been made out of crystal, so precise and careful were our movements. I had seen Pete throw reels on with one hand and slam down the door of the E-7 after changing a carbon. Gary and I were afraid that a heavy breath would split the film, and film splicing was not yet one of our skills.

"The Flamingo Rising" has the buoyancy of books—Frank Gilbreth and Ernestine Carey's "Cheaper by the Dozen" and John Dennis Fitzgerald's "Great Brain" series come to mind—about growing up in the penumbra of someone larger than life. The irresistible appeal these books have for young people is that, through exaggeration, they get at the basic experience of childhood: they tell what it's like to be in a world where other people seem unfathomable in their impulses, their motives, their visions—where you scurry to keep up. Larry Baker is writing for grown-ups, but he remembers how it felt not to be one, and renders the experience in unforced, unshowy prose, neither folksy nor formal. The result is a novel that's both modest and surprisingly seductive. "She is the only person I have ever known who makes me calm," Abe says of his intended, the funeral director's daughter. Maybe that's a funny thing to praise in your girlfriend, but "The Flamingo Rising" has the same quality: it makes you calm. ♦

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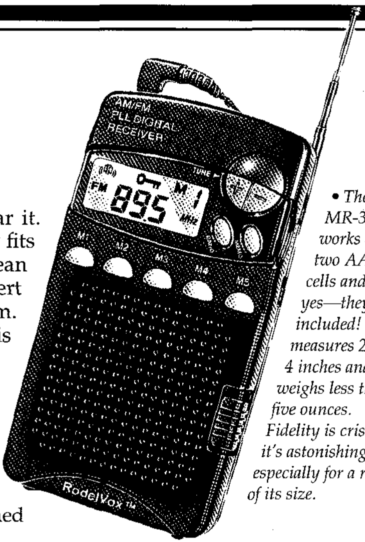

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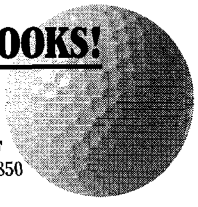
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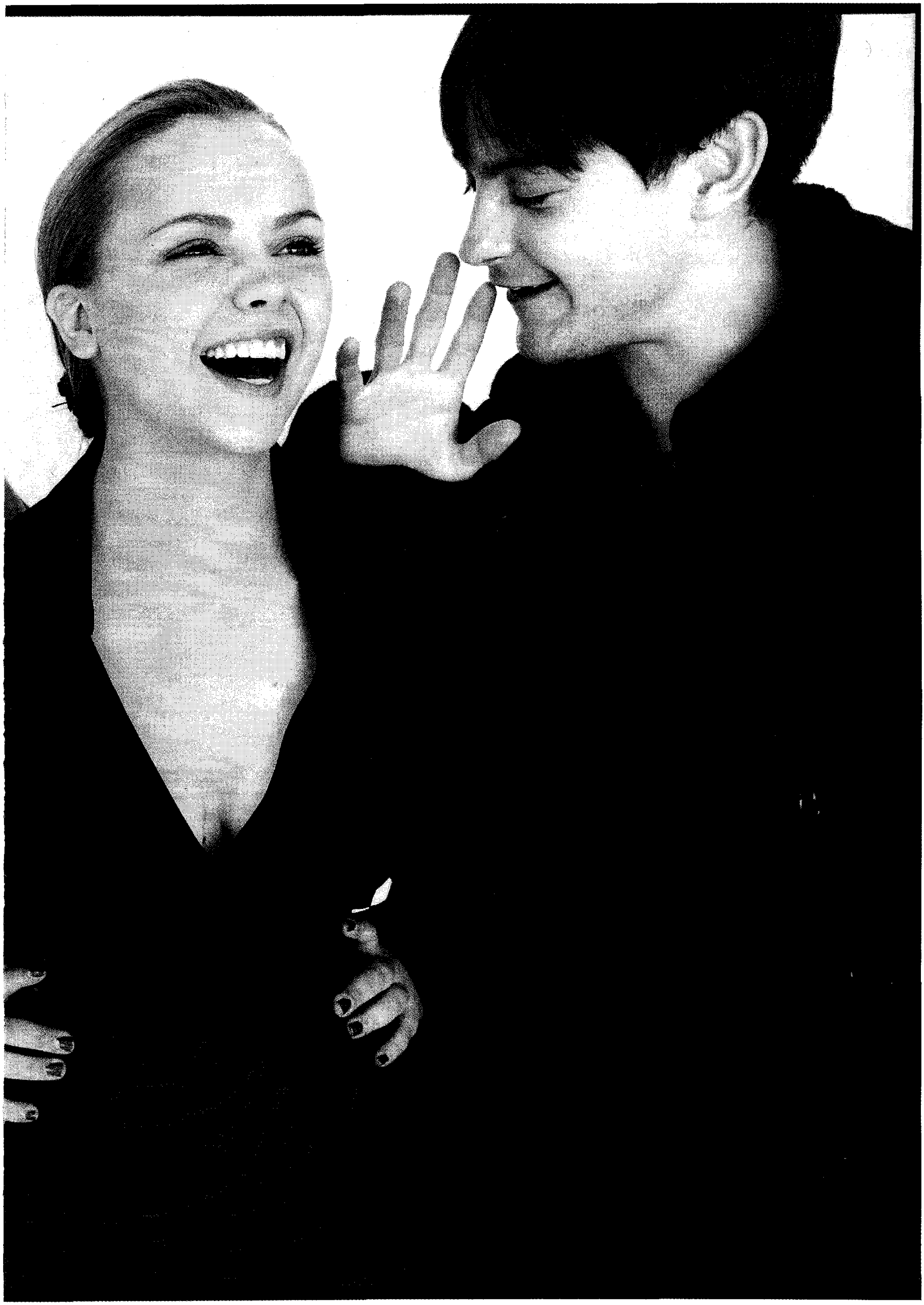

tion in "The Ice Storm," Ang Lee's film version of Rick Moody's novel about suburbia in the early seventies. (The older generation
at the Cannes Film Festival. The movie has been chosen to open the thirty-fifth New York Film Festival, on September 26th.

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ACROSS
1 KRA + KOW (rev.)
7 RING (2 defs.)
8 P + ACE
9 STALL (2 defs.)
11 GERMINAL (anag.)
12 E + RICh
15 FIR + E
16 RA(SPIES)T
18 A + STERn
19 NOVA (hidden)
20 MALE (*mail* hom.)
21 KRAMER (rev.)

DOWN
1 K + RUG + ERRAND
2 RIME (*rhyme* hom.)
3 ANGRIEST (anag.)
4 OPTIC (first letters)
5 ECLAIR (anag.)
6 BELL + WETHER (*belle* + *whether* hom.)
10 ANTI + ETAM (*mate* rev.)
13 RE + A + SON
14 S + PEAR
17 SOLE (2 defs.)

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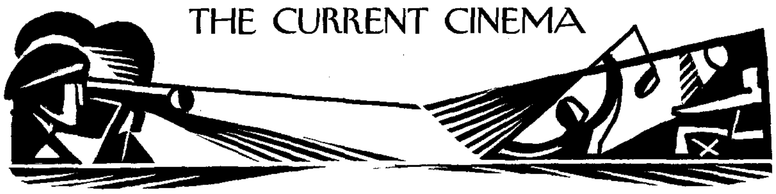
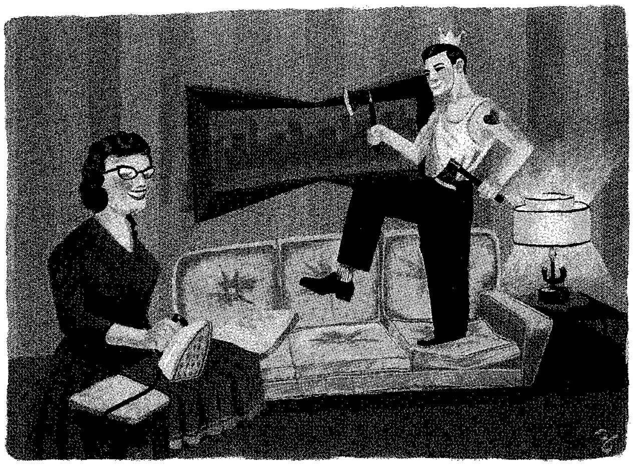


THE LANDLADY VANISHES

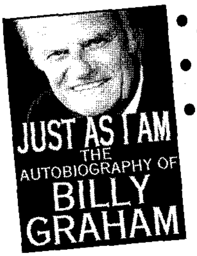
Crime among the cabbage roses, and the new "indies."

BY DAPHNE MERKIN

"INTIMATE RELATIONS" is the sort of film, in which lethal passion erupts under cover of domestic espectability, that the British seem to lo particularly well. Like other English ilms based on real-life events, such as "Dance with a Stranger" and "Scandal," t is soaked in period feel (the soundtrack features Rosemary Clooney favorites), and it takes its plot from a newspaper account of a stranger-than-fiction double murder. Set in the mid-fifties, in a provincial English market town, it tells the story of Marjorie Beasley (Julie Walters), a middle-aged housewife who will go to any lengths to satisfy her frustrated longings. She keeps busy with her sewing, her cups of cocoa, and her work in a laundry, but openly disdains her husband, Stanley (Matthew Walker), a machine operator who lost his leg in the First World War. (When he tries to interest her in a bit of friendly groping, she snaps, "Stanley, be a man!") With one married daughter, grandchildren, and an adolescent daughter, Joyce (Laura Sadler), who's still at home, Marjorie appears to be the perfect neighbor: deeply conventional, and kindly in a brusque sort of way, a believer in the power of cabbage-rose wallpaper. She also appears to be a woman who has come to terms with her life—or, at least, has sublimated her discontent in movie-star gossip and in her own cliché-spouting wisdom about ladylike behavior. But behind her plucked eyebrows and comically tended-to hair lurks a ravenous creature: she's what used to be called a nymphomaniac. When she takes in a lodger, the young, good-looking Harold Guppy (Rupert Graves), she offers him the promise of home-cooked breakfasts, along with the master bedroom (Stanley having been banished to sleep by himself in a closet-like space, while his wife shares the other bedroom with Joyce).


Mummy's boy toy: Walters and Graves in "Intimate Relations."

What begins as an unlikely seduction—with the bespectacled Marjorie, in a pink robe and fluffy slippers, creeping into Harold's bed and begging for "a little cuddle"—takes on the aura of farce when Joyce insists on sleeping next to them, and then veers into the grotesque: the same woman who asks her new lodger, fresh from reform school and the merchant navy, to call her "Mum" has such a constant craving for him that she makes the likes of Glenn Close in "Fatal Attraction" look weak-willed. Once she has had a taste of sexual gratification, Marjorie is hellbent on not letting Harold (played by Graves with a convincing mixture of slickness and vulnerability) out of her sight, even if it means jeopardizing the welfare of her daughter. Joyce, the ongoing witness to



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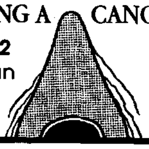

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all this lunatic folly, is brilliantly acted by the fourteen-year-old Sadler: half victim, half brat, she's the picture of unsullied innocence in her white anklets and hair ribbons, and it is she who brings about the tragic ending to a situation we've half taken for a grim comedy.

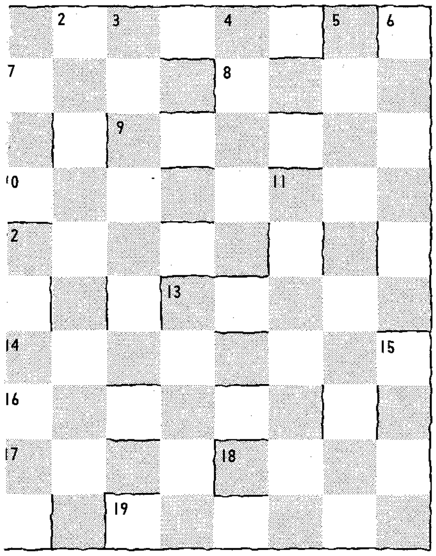
"Intimate Relations" is the first feature film by Philip Goodhew, who writes and directs with admirable crispness (if a shade too much campiness). His movie grasps that sexual obsession is inherently opaque: the only people who get it are the two people involved, and often only one of them really gets it. Goodhew underlines this sense of isolated dementia by establishing an atmosphere of creepy high normalcy, in which the birds always seem to be chirping and there is always someone hanging out the wash next door. But there's something almost too sealed off about Walters's performance—about the way she's called upon to move between the two poles of housewifely piety and devouring erotic attachment. When she finally explodes in an anguished speech about "gray little houses and bloody gray little people," we aren't quite prepared for the intense loneliness—the humanness—behind her various masks. The problem may be that Goodhew excels at the perverse; he knows more about how to shock us than how to move us.

I'VE never liked the term "indie": it smacks of a certain take-a-meeting knowingness, as though all movies made by independent young filmmakers on low budgets could possibly fit into a neat conceptual niche, and were destined to be swept up and distributed by the likes of Steven Spielberg. Having said that, I should grant that Salvatore Stabile's much ballyhooed "Gravesend" is the indie movie every studio head dreams of finding: the film is grainy, the camera is insistently handheld, the talent is as raw as the script is streetwise, and the twenty-two-year-old writer-director's knack for self-promotion is worth bottling. Oliver Stone, himself no stranger to shrewd image-inflation, "presents" the movie, about four dead-end kids with no future beyond the tips of their marijuana joints, and comparisons with Scorsese and Tarantino beg to be made. In truth, "Gravesend"—this terminally litera name refers to a neglected patch o Brooklyn on the rim of Coney Island—plays like "Mean Streets" as reconceived by Richard Price. This time, there is no Catholic guilt or other residue of civilized life against which the profanity and flickering brutality can work. Instead, there is Stabile's self-consciou choirboy voice-over (he articulates such Huck Finnish sentiments as "Zane wasn't well liked; we were his friend and we didn't like him"), which provides some much needed counterpoin to the references to "Jew lawyers" and "eight-foot niggers." The blood flow thick and fast (so fast that I have to admit I missed the moment when a third body was stowed in the ca trunk), and yet somehow I couldn' help feeling that this hip little fable doesn't take any real risks. Although the narrator insists, "I don't want to get sentimental—me and my friends were never like that," the film has the soppiest ending this side of "The Red Shoes."

"Sunday," on the other hand, is a rarity: an indie flick that bypasses slacker or Gen X malaise in favor of exploring grown-up sadness and resilience. It was the winner of the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance, and is directed with great poise by Jonathan Nossite from an elegant script co-written by him and James Lasdun. David Suche (he's Hercule Poirot on "Mystery!") and Lisa Harrow play the man and the woman—he a downsized I.B.M tax accountant, she an actress reduced to auditioning for "living-dead mutant roles"—who enter each other's lives one Sunday, the "day of nothingness," and trade consoling fictions. Against a bleak backdrop of diners, adult-video stores, and topless bars, one of the many eccentric yet profound questions the movie asks is "Do you think anyone ever planned on living in Queens?" Suchet, with his wet brown eyes, manages to make failure seem sexy, and it's a thrill to see an actress, in these exhaustively Demi Moore-ized times, whose beauty holds up to a bit of tummy. The camera, with its palette of reds and blues, finds something exhilarating in the grime and graffiti—the very abandonedness—of the setting, which perfectly suits the movie's tone of bruised affection. ◆

8 x 10 CRYPTIC

NO. 14 BY FRASER SIMPSON



ACROSS

1 Server follows sports team off (6)
7 Copy mid-sixties triumph (4)
8 Staff crushed part of a nutmeg shell (4)
9 Certain films upset Madras (6)
10 Father buries artists (8)
12 Fountain brought revitalization, in part (5)
13 Start being strange (5)
14 Prompt one-liner that is about tank (8)
16 Cavity packer (6)
17 Reportedly spots cooper's tool (4)
18 Thought aide silly (4)
19 Rate donkeys satisfactory (6)

DOWN

1 Over 8/13 of the alphabet (4)
2 Curses rapiers having damage (10)
3 Neatest ditties for the fiddler (7)
4 A pad attached to one violin (5)
5 Shortages leave a lasting effect on urban areas (10)
6 Not as much applied instruction (6)
11 Grenade tossed—get ready (2,5)
12 Female-chaser perfectly describes TV host (6)
13 Hear computer info is lousy for teen-agers (5)
15 Letters fill counter (4)

• •

The solution to puzzle No. 13 appears on page 92. For a free copy of "The New Yorker's Guide to Solving Cryptic Crosswords," please send your fax number or a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Solvers' Guide," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N. Y. 10036.

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THE LUMP LIST

BY WENDY WASSERSTEIN

Dear Subscriber: For those of you who believe that the New Year really begins with the fall season, this list comes in the nick of time. Anyone who says there are no available men left just hasn't been doing her homework. Talk about diversity! This month's selection of Last Unattached Male Persons (LUMPs) ranges from a triple-hot Hollywood agent to our favorite Kinko's Copies operator, who's still holding on after ninety-six months on the list. We guarantee, as always, that all our listees are completely unattached and willing to sit through at least the first course of dinner or Act I of a play. So move quickly! And take your lumps. The heart doesn't have to be a lonely hunter.

Hollywood Heaven—First time on the list. Jonathan (Skip) Fine, 32, talent agent. Works from 6 A.M. until midnight and seldom returns calls. Enjoys cigars, three-hour verti-climbing at the gym, and hanging out with clients. "I'm looking for a real relationship now," Jonathan has confided to the List. "Good relationships are the backbone of my business."

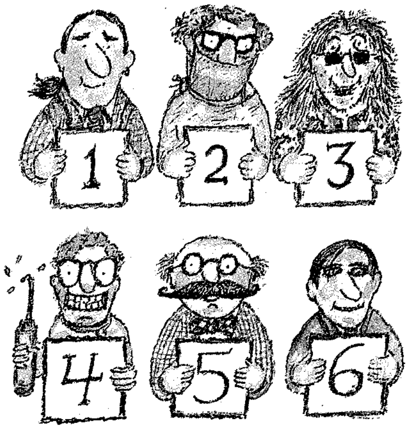
Two-for-One Royalty Special—This month only. Prince André and Prince Claude, 40, twin pretenders to the Transylvanian throne. The Princes attended Rollins College, in Winter Park, Florida, for one semester and currently live in Gstaad, where they enjoy skiing, hiking, and duty-free shopping. "We pledge that one day our wife will be Queen of an Independent Transylvania—if her father pays for the castle." Both Princes' eyes fill with tears. "Pick either of us, or both. We share *everything*."

A Boy a Mother Could Love—Bernard Lincoln Schwab, 46, divorced investment banker, is anxious to remarry, because all the major players have. "It's not enough to bring trophy women to benefits anymore," Link says he's learned. "I want to bring a trophy wife."

A Doctor in the House—Dr. Luis Silver, Brazilian plastic surgeon, 36. This doctor can laser four inches from the hips and add it to a patient's height. Married three times, Dr. Silva is looking for a real woman with a warm heart. "Any woman can be made beautiful on the surface," Dr. Luis told us from his Beverly Hills clinic, "but genuine beauty comes from deep in the soul." Women over one hundred twenty pounds need not respond. Height over 5'7" preferable. Blue eyes. No contacts, please.

Start from Scratch—Ved Varajan, 34, Palo Alto multimillionaire, inventor of "Marscape," the first Internet link to Mars. Ved still lives in his Stanford dorm room and enjoys cyber-sex and computer solitaire. "I'm insecure, so I like to propose on the first date," says the never married Varajan, whose net worth currently tops four hundred million. A girl could do a lot worse.

Mature Audiences Only—Former acid-rock drummer Theodore T. Jones, 48, recently cured his well-documented fear of intimacy and commitment with a mixture of Paxil, Midol, and wheat-grass juice. Ted enjoys yoga and Rocky and Bullwinkle cartoons, and is looking for a calm, nonverbal, materna woman over sixty-five. He admits, "I've been through a lot, and I'm not interested in going through any more."



Our Own Root-Canal Man—Dr Henry Weissblatt, 56, West Village dentist. Dr. Weissblatt never thought he was anything out of the ordinary until we made him a star! For nine months running, he's been the List's only straight single man living in Greenwich Village. Although he receives more than twenty calls a day, Dr. Weissblatt has not lost his priorities: "I am hard at work on a WaterPik infomercial and seek someone fabulous to share my life with." Dr. Weissblatt has seen "Chasing Amy" twenty times and is eager to hear from bisexual women.

Oldest Living English Graduate Student Tells All—Bart McBride, 55, has been writing his thesis for thirty years and works the midnight shift at Kinko's on Thirty-third and Lexington Avenue. Bart lives with his mother and has never married. "I'm a perfectionist," he explains. "That's why I haven't finished my thesis, or moved."

Camelot Revisited—Jason Webster, 26, congressional aid. Jason is obsessed with Carolyn Bessette Kennedy and wants to marry an Ivy League graduate who looks just like her. "I know this limits my playing field, so to speak, but I don't want to give any wrong signals. If someone reads this who looks just like Carolyn, went to Brown, and likes Caio Fonseca's paintings, Knopf books, Prada shoes, and water polo, please call me. I want to marry you." ♦

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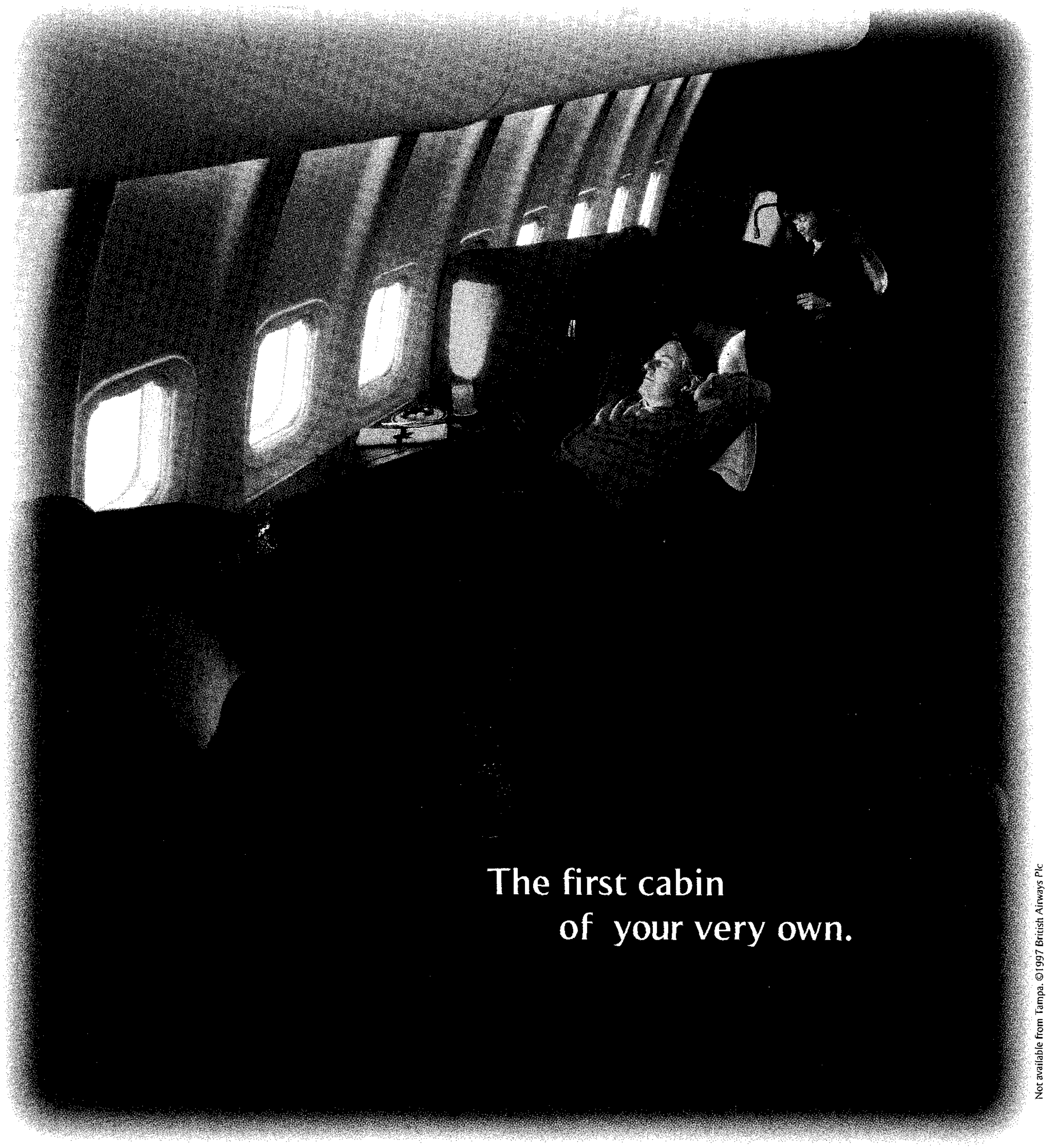

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